OUR MAN AT THE U.N. ANNE TUCKERMAN

THE NATION

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EDITORIALS

Meet the President

Now that the President's popularity has reached an all-time low, he has suddenly decided to "go public" in a big way. Emerging from the seclusion he normally prefers, he has conducted monologues with C. L. Sulzberger of *The New York Times* and a group of women reporters, and has bobbed up, surprisingly, on NBC's *Today* show, as a self-invited guest. At the moment he is more accessible to the media than Henry Kissinger or Martha Mitchell. But he is not, we are assured, trying to change his image—he now concedes that it is beyond changing. What he is trying to do, so we are told, is to project more vividly the image he has.

Because we approve of the President's determination, belated and hurried though it may be, to communicate oftener and with more people, we would like to offer a constructive suggestion. On February 16, 1970, we ran an article ("Nixspeak: Rhetoric of Opposites") in which two professors of speech analyzed the President's habitual use of certain rhetorical devices in his public utterances. His addiction to opposites, the authors suggested, was so consistent as to imply that it was not a conscious technique but evidence of a way of thinking. They quoted with approval Meg Greenfield's perceptive remark that Mr. Nixon is "apparently unable to make a statement that is *not* an argument. Ideas never quite exist for him."

If his emphasis on communication is to succeed, he should abandon or modify his dependence on opposites. For example, he spoke to Mr. Sulzberger of "superhawks and superdoves," and of his brave effort to hold a middle position between these contending forces. But since two-thirds of the public want U.S. troops removed from Vietnam by a fixed date, just who are the superhawks and superdoves? The President is not perilously trapped between equally powerful contending forces: he is being pushed ever harder by a large and increasing majority to end the war as quickly as possible. Most of the former hawks are now doves and most of the doves are simply more dovish than they were when he took office. The consistent use of opposites might not be important if it served as an aid to communication, but it has quite a different effect. By dividing his critics into superhawks and superdoves, Mr. Nixon must annoy literally millions of Americans who do not regard themselves as fitting either category and who no doubt dislike being so categorized.

The speech professors also urged the President to abandon the practice, which he has pursued throughout his career, of staking out straw positions and setting up straw men. At the moment, he is inveighing against "neo-isolationism" and "neo-isolationists." But the war in Vietnam is what isolates this country, not the critics of the war. The truth is that isolationists, in any meaningful sense, are hard to find. The scale of our overseas investments and the rise of multinational corporations are proof enough that American big business has not retired to seclusion. A nation that is verging toward world empire may be said to be interventionist, perhaps, or imperialist, but not isolationist.

One might well argue that the President is more isolationist than his critics. His tardiness in formulating a new China policy, his sharp rejection of the plan of the Japanese textile industry for voluntary quotas, the freeze he has imposed on relations with the new regime in Chile, his courtship of Franco and the Greek colonels, his failure to heed the rising current of anti-Americanism in Turkey, his refusal to explore the possibility of normalizing relations with Cuba—these and other policies make him the "neo-isolationist." It is true that he says we must continue to supply "the hose and water," but the role of global fireman is not internationalist; it bespeaks the arrogance of power rather than the fraternity of mutual respect.

Mr. Nixon may think himself a "deeply committed pacifist," as he told Mr. Sulzberger, but the policies he continues to pursue do not sustain the hope that Vietnam is "probably our last war." Irked by the President's performance in the exclusive interview it had obtained, the *Times* observed editorially that he seemed to be more interested in making "high-school debaters' points than in posing the issues." It is a conclusion difficult to avoid.

Needling the Press

The attack which Vice President Agnew first launched against the media in his Des Moines speech of November 13, 1969, is now being restated in more sophisticated versions. One example—there are others—is Daniel P. Moynihan's "The Presidency and the Press," published in the March issue of *Commentary* and accompanied by Norman Podhoretz's editorial endorsement of its conclusions. As Mr. Moynihan sees it, the "national press"—*The New York Times, The Washington Post,* the newsweeklies and the Washington press corps in particular—is not doing right by the President. Five factors are responsible: the entry into journalism in recent years of more persons from middle- and upper-class backgrounds who had imbibed "the adversary culture" at their Ivy League colleges; the belief in the "near-omnipotency" of the Presidency, which inevitably produces a rapid disillusionment with the incumbent; the willingness of the Washington press corps to print stories "leaked" by members of the bureaucracy antagonistic to the President; the inability of the media to distinguish between real news and a non-event staged for the publicity, and, finally, the unwillingness of the press to cultivate a tradition of self-correction.

Only one of these charges will be examined here—the matter of leaks. It is no doubt true that bureaucrats, for a variety of motives, have leaked stories which have embarrassed the President or made it difficult for him to realize a particular intention. No doubt the traffic in leaks has grown as the bureaucracy has grown. But other factors are also involved: the tendency of successive recent administrations to deter the bureaucracy from speaking freely with the press; the desire of those administrations to centralize the dissemination of news and to manage it; the fact that large areas of information have been closed to the press by being classified "secret" or "top secret."

Further, Mr. Moynihan would have us believe that only bureaucrats hostile to the President leak stories to the press. Yet for years White House aides, often with the

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approval if not at the instigation of the President, have routinely leaked stories to the press. Top-level intelligence information is leaked to selected Senators and other spokesmen (see editorial below). The FBI is definitely not one of the agencies that Mr. Moynihan has in mind when he complains about leaks, but the bureau has been sneaking reports to favored publications for years. Recently, Mayor Joseph Alioto of San Francisco forced an admission from the Department of Justice that an FBI agent had leaked to *Look* the damaging gossip that formed the basis of his libel action. The President could put a stop to this favorite practice of the FBI instanter if he were prepared to act. If leaks have become endemic in Washington, the office of the Presidency bears its full share of responsibility. Mr. Moynihan has reason to be sensitive on the subject, after the famous "benign neglect" episode, but he has allowed his personal touchiness to distort his assessment of a subject that deserves a more impartial study.

There is, of course, truth in some of Mr. Moynihan's criticisms of the press—as there was in the Vice President's—but one is disturbed by an overtone of annoyance with journalism that has become critical. Mr. Moynihan, with Mr. Agnew, believes that "the elitist press" is responsible for the low state of national morale, that it consciously seeks to disparage national achievement. True, Mr. Moynihan concedes that the troubled relations between the Presidency and the press began with the "massive deceptions" of this "undeclared, unwanted, misunderstood, or not understood at all" war in Vietnam. But he does not say that the deceptions have continued. No reference is made to the elaborate propaganda campaign which the Administration has launched to mislead the public and press about the objectives and progress of the invasion of Laos. Nothing is said about the way in which the Administration has tried to make it difficult for the media to get the facts. If the President is hedged in by a hostile press, why, until recently, has he tried to keep the press at a distance? Why has he called so few regularly scheduled press conferences? Other questions suggest themselves. Why is it that our best universities—our "elite" institutions—have become sources of the "adversary culture"? One gains the impression, reading Moynihan and Podhoretz (and listening to Agnew), that the "elite press" is somehow an adversary of government and of bourgeois values—that if not un-American, it is "anti-American." Just how much elitist criticism, Mr. Moynihan asks, is good for democracy? That is a curious question to be raised by anyone who believes in a free press.

The Rites of Spring

Sen. Stuart Symington, on the basis of his long experience both in the Pentagon and the Senate, has noted that with balmy weather and the cherry blossoms along the Potomac, ominous news issues with the utmost regularity from the military. These evil tidings are, of course, timed to the annual struggle over the defense budget.

This year a new twist was added, and Senator Symington did not like it. It began when President Nixon, in his February 25 foreign policy report to the Congress, hinted

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that the Russians might be deploying an "altogether new missile system." However, when top intelligence officials briefed the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy, nothing was said about such a development; it remained a mystery. Then on March 4 the possibility of such an ominous threat was discussed in an atmosphere of utmost secrecy before the Senate Armed Services Committee, of which Mr. Symington is a member. How impressed Mr. Symington was we do not know, but he emerged tight-lipped from the meeting and flew to Kansas City on other business.

To his surprise, a reporter from the *Kansas City Star* phoned to inquire about the grave threat posed by the new Russian weapon system. Bound by his oath, Mr. Symington declined all comment. A second surprise followed. Senator Symington learned that Sen. Henry (Scoop) Jackson had gone on nationwide TV to warn the citizenry of a "huge new Soviet missile system." Since Senator Jackson had not been present at the Armed Services Committee meeting, the obvious inference was that he had been given the very highest authorization for making his network splurge.

Mr. Symington was annoyed. For one thing, he doubts the reports. He has lived through countless intelligence guesses and briefings which turned out to be wrong or exaggerated, and in this instance the Pentagon does not pretend to have any hard data. "We are not sure what it is or what the Soviet intentions are," the spokesman said. Then why all the secrecy, since no secret has been cracked?

And something else annoyed the Senator. The Administration is forever implying that the Senate Foreign Relations Committee (of which Mr. Symington is also a member) engages in "leaks." Such an accusation was made recently by John Lehman, Jr., of the White House staff. The truth is that the Administration itself, at the highest levels, slips items to favored recipients whenever it sees some political advantage in doing so. The Jackson incident is by no means an isolated instance.

Senator Jackson is obviously the Pentagon's candidate for the Democratic Presidential nomination, and he is also on cozy terms with the President, who would have preferred him to Mr. Laird as Secretary of Defense. In the alarm over the new, probably nonexistent Russian missile system, "Scoop" got a scoop of sorts. He should, however, have learned a lesson from Mr. Symington's reaction. Wise politicians avoid tangling with Mr. Symington: he deals in facts, and for that reason his words carry weight in the Senate.

The Need for Patience

General Eisenhower once said that the people of the world were tired of war and wanted peace, and that it was about time for governments to give them what they wanted. There is much truth in that, but it is also true that minorities can sometimes make it extremely difficult for a government to negotiate a settlement of hostilities. Consider, for example, the severe pressures now being brought to bear on Mrs. Golda Meir by her domestic political opposition. This hard-line opposition accuses her of being willing to make territorial concessions, while at the same time friendly foreign governments—the United States in particular—feel she is being too rigid. President Sadat of Egypt has his own domestic political troubles, and they are likely to intensify as the parties come closer to a settlement—if, despite everything, they finally do.

Secretary Rogers is right in his general thesis that it would be a great tragedy if the present opportunity for a reasonably durable peace in the Middle East were lost. Almost everyone wants such a peace, but everyone also wants a peace tailored to his side's specifications. Still, the Soviets and the United States seem inclined to go along with a peace-keeping mission, and there is a growing need to reopen the Suez Canal, a matter in which many neutral nations have a stake (as do the Russians). As for the belligerents themselves, there has now been a considerable pause in the fighting, and though passions have not cooled, reason has assumed a role alongside the heat and violence.

But if Secretary Rogers speaks soothing words which in themselves make sense, it is something of an exaggeration to say to Mrs. Meir and her colleagues that geography means little in this age of jet planes and rockets. Territory is so compressed in the Middle East that a few hundred miles may make a very real difference. A peace-keeping force sounds better than it is. A U.N. peace-keeping force was on the scene in 1967, but then suddenly it melted away and the Israelis were left to fight alone. This could happen again; if, for example, the Russians and the Americans should fall out. On the basis of the 1967 experience, the Israelis have a right to be concerned about their boundaries. It hardly makes sense to expect them to give back the Golan Heights, from which the Syrians shelled Israeli farms at will. Then there is the problem of guerrilla raids. The fact is, the pre-1967 boundaries were a source of perpetual trouble. On arriving in New York for his current American talks, Israeli Foreign Minister Abba Eban reiterated to Secretary-General Thant and to mediator Gunnar Jarring his country's determination to hold to boundaries it considers defensible.

For all the clamor it aroused, Mrs. Meir's interview with the correspondent of the *Times* of London was to be welcomed. There was nothing very startling in it. In a piece for *The Nation* (November 9, 1970), Herbert Krosney, our Israel correspondent, outlined substantially the same Israeli objectives.

It is a time for tact, patience and a search for the leverage that might result in ultimate agreement. Perhaps the Canal holds the secret. Sadat has let it be known that, in the context of an overall settlement, Egypt would consider allowing canal-clearing operations to start in return for a partial Israeli pullback. Or one might begin with a reduction of forces along the Canal, and work from that toward more general questions. The one thing to avoid is heavy pressure on the Israelis, or any attempt to engage in the diplomatic arm twisting that has been none too successful in less delicate situations. Progress may be slow, but there has been some, and there may be more if the principal parties will tread softly, and put away their big sticks.

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Our Man at the U.N.

George Bush, the New Englander turned Texas oil man, who served as a Representative from that state until he was defeated in his 1970 bid for the Senate, moved this month into his new job as U.S. Ambassador to the United Nations. He may well be the right man for the job at this time. Mr. Bush is not a professional diplomat, but neither were any of those in the long line of men who have held the post before him, with the exception of his immediate predecessor, Charles W. Yost.

Mr. Bush claims to "have the ear and attention" of the President. Others had it—or thought they did—before him. But unlike Adlai Stevenson or Arthur Goldberg, Ambassador Bush comes to the U.N. unencumbered by a personal philosophy in the field of foreign policy. That this may be an advantage is suggested by the experiences of the two better-known men, whose convictions often ran counter to those of the Administration, producing frustration and a lack of credibility. Another Presidential favorite, Henry Cabot Lodge, stood squarely for official policy, but in the period of acute cold war in which he served at the United Nations, his main role was "to have the last word" in daily verbal jousts with his Soviet opponent.

Confrontation is no longer the fashion in diplomacy. Systematic toughness is out, as is grand ideological posturing. Negotiation and smoothness are the present style. And smoothness is what Ambassador Bush exudes, together with a casual manner and apparent candor, and also the seriousness of purpose, business sense, energy and optimism that a good many foreigners associate with "the nice American." A mixture of Gary Cooper and John Lindsay—with money.

Ambassador Bush does not hide his desire to make "a success" of his new post by being a "forceful, hopeful leader" at the United Nations. Whether or not he will accomplish this depends a great deal on the outcome of the current diplomacy on the Middle East, into which he was plunged on the first day of his mandate. At this date, only a positive result could lift the United Nations out of the doldrums into which the peace-making functions envisaged by the founders of the organization have fallen. The Jarring mission symbolizes the only hope of assertion and redemption of such capabilities.

Ultimate success or failure in the matter of the Middle East does not depend on the personal qualities of Ambassador Bush, but he can be useful in the complex process of quiet diplomacy which supports Dr. Jarring's tireless attempts at mediation. Colleagues of the new U.S. representative in the four-power talks on the Middle East have found him adaptable and adroit in this, to him, unfamiliar setting, where every word counts and can immediately be used against its author. According to some accounts, not only had Bush done his homework very conscientiously but he was quick to change from an excessively businesslike tone to one more tactful when he was accused of giving ultimatums. His baptism by fire will not be complete until he has shown himself capable of handling the endless procedural tactics which are the lifeblood of the U.N.; but, to outsiders, he appears so relaxed that if China were to enter the organization during his term (and Ambassador Bush thinks, on this score, that "everything is possible"), one can imagine him casually shaking hands with the new envoy without exerting the emotional discipline such a gesture would require of more seasoned U.S. diplomats.

While the U.N. is waiting for a settlement in the Middle East and the entry of Peking, and while individual governments, including the United States, are happily engaged again in power politics and bilateral diplomacy, the opportunity for Mr. Bush or any other U.N. ambassador to present a strong profile seems rather remote. President Nixon, however, has decided to try to sell a new image for the United Nations, "a new dimension" in which Ambassador Bush is to play his full part. While peace is elusive, the "reordering of priorities," Mr. Bush said in his first speech after taking office, "will stress the U.N. involvement with a whole spectrum of activities in the economic, social, scientific and technological field," where national and international interests coincide.

In other words, the United Nations, created "to save future generations from the scourge of war," is to become —and has in fact already become—primarily a center for multilateral agreements on worldwide problems dealing with development and social ills, and for the elaboration of a new international law to keep up with the conquest of space and the exploration of the oceans. The list of such problems is long and closely linked with national problems—environment, narcotics, population control (pot and the pill, as some whimsical delegate remarked), hijacking, kidnapping, assistance to victims of natural disasters. The definition of the present-day U.N. as "a Ford Foundation without the money" may be too flippant, but the controller of the organization's finances would undoubtedly welcome whatever persuasion Ambassador Bush can exert in Washington to increase the American contribution.

In this new and very worthwhile international field, Ambassador Bush plans maximum activity. He is well qualified as an expert in international oil operations, and as an energetic and compassionate legislator in the areas of unemployment, education, urban affairs, population and earth resources. He will find full cooperation among high U.N. officials, who are always eager to stress the less "sensational" products of the glass house.

He may not be able to make the world forget that the United Nations was powerless to stop the war in Vietnam, but his proclaimed intention is to be not only "an advocate of U.S. policy" in the U.N. but an equally forceful spokesman for the U.N. in the United States. It is no criticism to state that he remains a politician. Articulate and photogenic, he will seek to become a familiar figure on television. If he is successful, he may be in a position to remind the voters, when the time comes, that he was born and raised in New England, was a war hero, served Texas in Congress, and held his own among 127 nations. That record, some political prophets hint, could make him a serious contender for the Vice Presidency in 1972.

ANNE TUCKERMAN

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ARMS AND APARTHEID

THE U.S. SHOULD CUT LOOSE

J. ROGERS HOLLINGSWORTH

Mr. Hollingsworth is professor of comparative historical politics at the University of Wisconsin. His The Politics of Nation and State Building *will be published by Little, Brown this spring. Mr. Hollingsworth has recently returned from a visit of eighteen months in Africa.*

Somewhat unwittingly, the United States may be acquiring another ally that brings with it more promise of opprobrium than of benefit. Tied to Great Britain through NATO, the United States is indirectly linked to British plans to resume arms sales to the Republic of South Africa. Once Great Britain starts providing the arms, South Africa will automatically begin to have a special relationship to NATO. And South Africa obviously wishes to be so intricately tied to NATO that an attack on South Africa will be viewed as an attack on a member.

Meanwhile, the increased Soviet presence in the Indian Ocean is causing some NATO officials to think in such terms. Gen. Hans Kruls, a former chairman of the Netherlands Joint Chiefs of Staff and now editor of the NATO publication, *NATO's Fifteen Nations,* recently suggested that South Africa should be an "outside member" of the organization. In addition, Kruls said, "I would not be surprised if, thanks to the Russians, NATO can find a solution in the future to the question of drawing up a defense agreement with South Africa." With one eye on the Soviet fleet, other NATO officials are studying with considerable interest, and envy, the South African plans for a highly sophisticated radar and communications system capable of monitoring the movements of every ship in the South Atlantic and Indian Oceans. Preparations have already started for its installation.

If NATO countries become intricately tied to South Africa, the legitimacy of the alliance will be further weakened—especially for Denmark and Norway. More important, British sale of arms to South Africa will once again carry the cold war into tropical Africa, because nothing could do more to increase Chinese and Soviet influence among the black nations in that part of the world. It is in this context that Harold Wilson recently referred to Prime Minister Heath as "the new secret weapon of the men in the Kremlin."

While Mr. Heath's announced decision to sell only helicopters has disarmed some critics, many think that more arms sales will follow. Indeed, it is not easy for him to back down. The British Prime Minister is a man who, once having become convinced on an issue, will fight for his position with almost emotional zeal.

For the United States to be linked with actions which tend to strengthen the government of South Africa would be most unfortunate, for a whole set of reasons. First, the United States would be in danger of guilt by association. In some respects, the situation recalls the decision by the British and French to invade Suez in 1956. Identified with an action with which it was unsympathetic, the United States nevertheless eventually became blamed for its allies' policies. The same prospect obtains vis-à-vis South Africa. Indeed, the proposal of British arms sales and partial integration of the British defense system with that of South Africa has already caused many black Africans to see the United States, Britain's major ally, as being behind the entire affair.

Somewhat inclined to look to the United States for moral and world leadership, yet disturbed by the caricature of idealism presented in Vietnam, African leaders in particular have been distressed by American attitudes toward South Africa. They point to negative American votes on United Nations resolutions about colonialism and to American failure to speak against the British sale of arms. Washington's attempts to win friends in Africa, and in much of the rest of the world, are unlikely to achieve marked success as long as the American Government is bound to allies which assist the separation of races in South Africa, as well as to Portugal, which is now determined to maintain sovereignty over Portuguese Guinea, Angola and Mozambique. A case in point is the recent wave of anti-U.S. sentiment that spread across Africa in the wake of the abortive attempt to invade Guinea.

Links to South Africa, regardless of their reasons, create the same kinds of resentment. On the other hand, the Soviet Government has been quick to identify with and support the freedom fighters of Africa, a point not lost on sensitive African regimes.

Second, for the tenth of the American population that is black, the issue of South Africa is important. For some of them, the issues involving South Africa are much more salient even than those of Indochina. Undoubtedly the black people of the United States will in the next decade succeed in doing what some white liberals have attempted to do but failed: they will inject South Africa as a major issue into American politics. A federal government with questionable legitimacy among blacks will be even less tolerable if it has, or sanctions, ties to South Africa. Already pressures for a different policy toward South Africa are mounting, not only among the black people of this country but among student groups of various ethnic backgrounds. American churches have also become increasingly interested in the problems of South Africa, as a portion of their contributions to the World Council of Churches is assigned to the freedom fighter groups in Africa.

There are those within the American Government who take what they consider a *Realpolitik* view toward African affairs. They see South Africa as a country of impressive military strength and view the black African states as weak, unstable and unreliable. And while these views somewhat distort the real facts, the more important consideration is that American policy makers must never again fall into the Vietnamese error—thinking that the U.S. Government can effectively pursue a foreign policy to which a large segment of its public is opposed. A

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realistic U.S. policy must be based on the assumption that public support for this country's actions are an important element of its political and military power. And anyone who believes that America can become tied to South Africa without creating divisions just as deep as those brought about by the war in Vietnam is isolated from major sectors of American society.

Third, there are signs of cracks in South African society, strains that might be acute enough to achieve some internal changes in racial policies. But a South African Government bolstered by the moral endorsement that can be read into British arms sales is less likely to yield on policies of race.

For two decades, the Nationalist government of South Africa has elaborated and extended apartheid, a policy of complete separation of races. Apartheid, a word coined by the Afrikaners, is defined to mean wholly isolated development for different races in separate geographical areas, with minimum mixing of white, black and "coloured," regardless of context. Supposedly, each group will have its own institutions: schools, parliaments, courts. For the black Africans, the areas set aside for residence have been designated as Bantu "homelands" or Bantustans, and official policy is that almost all those living outside homelands should be removed to them.

But during the past two decades, much of the profit in South African industry has stemmed from the use of cheap labor, and any manpower dispersal program that threatens a serious change is unlikely to be implemented. To put the problem baldly, the success of the homelands policy, dependent upon truly massive government investment for its realization, would jeopardize the prosperity of the existing industrial component of the South African economy.

Although the government is committed to political independence for the Bantustans, real autonomy seems unlikely. The South African military, for one, is very much opposed to independence for areas that have Indian Ocean coastline, or borders with foreign countries. They reason that such easy access to the homelands will cause South Africa problems with freedom fighter groups, or conceivably with Communist influences. Moreover, the much feared Black Nationalism, containing threats of societal revolution, might easily be the product of either independent or developed homelands. Concentrating people with urban experience and then mandating political institutions upon them would seem a recipe for revolution. A few signs have appeared.

Nevertheless, the official policy in South Africa is to speed resettlement. To induce and force migration from urban areas, the conditions of urban residence have been made steadily more onerous for nonwhites. There are variations in the local situations: the coloured of the Capetown area, for a number of reasons, do not suffer regulations as severe as those applied to the Africans of the Transvaal. Many coloured are allowed to own property, live in the central city, and hold jobs as skilled workers. The range of what is permitted results in part from South Africa's three-tier system of government: central, provincial, municipal. The United Party dominates the Capetown Council and that has meant a somewhat more tolerant system for administering "nonwhite" affairs. However, legislation before the South African Parliament now convened would impose greater centralization on the system, and probably place the coloured community of the Capetown area in much the same bind that afflicts the Africans of Johannesburg. The nonwhite communities are quite powerless to resist the change, for spies and informers are believed to be numerous, penalties for even mild protest are extremely harsh, and channels for any meaningful political participation are nonexistent. Under preventive detention statutes, a person suspected of engaging in illegal activity may be held indefinitely without charges or trial. Censorship and restrictions on the press minimize the ability of the mass media to expose the harshness of the system. Overall, the juggernaut of apartheid seems unassailable.

As 1970 ended, however, many in South Africa were beginning to wonder where the juggernaut had taken them. For the first time since the early 1960s, when the ruthless and efficient state made it clear that protest would not be tolerated, that the system would not bend, straws in the wind suggest that some flexibility might be entertained.

In part, South African groups are responding to pressures from overseas, but South African whites are themselves expressing more criticism of racial policy than had been heard in a decade. The scale of questioning is modest, and may be overwhelmed by the moral boost the government will get from its purchase of British arms. Since the arms in question could readily be obtained from other European powers, South African eagerness to get them from Britain is best understood as a request for endorsement of the regime.

Most of the pressures for change are economic in base and direction. Tied into the world economic system, South Africa is plagued by problems of inflation. Since the Job Reservation Act bars nonwhites from a host of positions, there is an acute shortage of skilled labor, one consequence of which is very high wages for such labor. The Federated Chamber of Industries reported a shortage of 63,000 industrial workers in October 1970. Further, the balance of payments has recently tipped acutely against South Africa, with exports increasing only very slightly, and imports moving up sharply. Should Britain gain admission to the European Economic Community, South Africa would probably lose some of the trading preferences it now enjoys with the United Kingdom, and that would cause further dislocation.

The solution to all these problems is thought by many to lie in the alteration of racial employment practices. If more black and coloured workers could be brought into skilled positions, if nonwhites were used more efficiently, manufacturing could expand and exports could increase. Efforts to recruit skilled laborers from Europe, though moderately successful, have not solved the problem: 45,000 immigrants a year are insufficient. Thus, much of the agitation for change centers upon the access of nonwhites to skilled positions.

Of course, the demand for relaxation of racial employment barriers is not new in South Africa, but it is being made now by Afrikaner business and commercial

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leaders, a group previously uncritical of government policy. During the past decade, Afrikaners have been moving steadily into business, banking, insurance and high finance. Once the domain of the English-speaking community, business in South Africa now has a sizable and influential Afrikaner community, and it enjoys connections with political leaders far more intimate than English businessmen ever achieved. The mobilization of this group, faced with the choice of maintaining apartheid at the cost of lacking skilled workers and suffering an economic slowdown, or relaxing racial barriers in order to stimulate the economy, can have important effects on the racial system.

Newspapers are filled with stories of job shortages. An example is the desire of the Johannesburg City Council to hire coloured bus drivers in order to relieve a desperate shortage. In the building trades, the labor problem is particularly acute. There are simply not enough white skilled workers to handle the construction projects under way or planned. Certainly, South Africa must find more skilled labor if it is to continue its urban and industrial growth.

But changes in jobs for blacks and coloured may not necessarily challenge the basic social system. Though some critics and commentators look for a carry-over from economic change to social change, most of those who talk economic improvements for nonwhites are not raising issues of residential or political freedom.

However, there are other sources of pressure for the broader change: the young in some universities, both English and Afrikaner intellectuals and some of the churches. Each of these groups is aware that South Africa verges on becoming ingrown, looked down upon by many other parts of the world. White South Africans want approval and are sensitive to criticism. South African sporting teams are not welcome in many places; delegates to international conferences are not recognized; scholars are quietly shunted aside as being too controversial to participate in programs. Slights of the sporting world, or threats of disqualification, are especially important to this sports-minded nation (where, however, teams of mixed racial composition are unwelcome). No one likes to be reminded that he is a pariah.

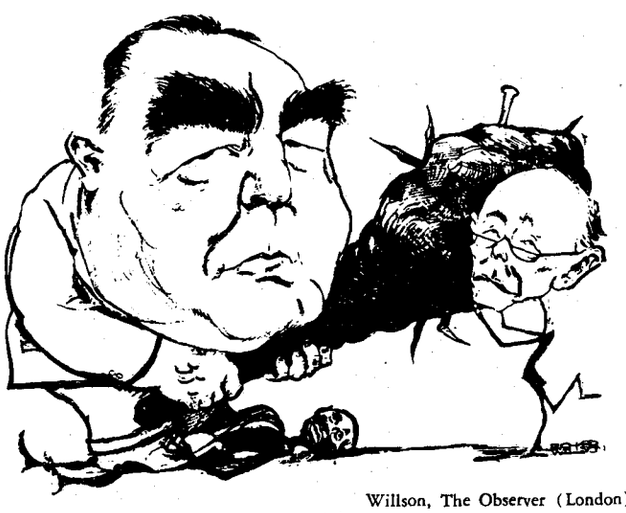
Criticism is voiced rather softly, for the weapons in the government's arsenal are readily used. Still, university students have protested in Johannesburg about the procedures and outcomes of recent trials; clerics have published their impressions of the homelands; the Institute of Race Relations documents malnutrition and housing shortages among Africans, and occasional professors suggest alternative programs. These forces, the traditional sources of protest in any country, have been quite ineffective to date.

The prospect of war with black African countries is also troublesome, even if it does not actually alarm South Africans. They want no war with black Africa; indeed, they would like to export their products to its markets. Wanting to expand, business interests realize that access to the rest of Africa is not likely as long as the South African Government maintains its present policy of white supremacy. Agreements like the recent one with Malagasy are sought, and denunciations by Kaunda and Nyerere are heard with apprehension.

Despite these factors pressing for a changed relationship between the races, the probability that it will come rapidly is not great. Though the Nationalist Party suffered setbacks twice last year in federal and provincial elections, in which some of the right-wing elements of the party were retired, the United Party shows no sign today of being able to mount a successful challenge. And its racial policies do not present a substantial alternative to the prevailing system, since they are largely confined to allowing some flexibility in racial matters for economic reasons rather than redesigning the society for equality or integration. The Progressive Party, more willing to tackle the reworking of the whole of society, lacks a base broad enough to do much more than make waves. Nor is the parliamentary situation likely to alter, given the overrepresentation of rural areas that is characteristic of the South African system of districting. Moreover, many predict that within ten years the municipal government of Johannesburg, hitherto controlled by the United Party, will fall to the Nationalists as a result of demographic change. Not only do the Afrikaners have a higher birth rate than those of English background but Afrikaners are pouring into the cities from the farms.

On a different economic front, there are serious objections to any racial policy change that would alter the availability of cheap labor on which the gold mines and agriculture depend. Trade statistics make it clear that the prosperity of the mines is still the linchpin of the economy. Even the recent fall in the Johannesburg stock market is pooh-poohed by many as an indication of national economic troubles: if world conditions continue to worsen, they reason, South Africa's high rate of economic growth during the 1960s will continue to recommend it as an investment point. When post-Sharpeville currency control went into effect, reinvestment of earnings in South Africa produced an economic boom, particularly in industries providing substitutes for imports.

Finally, the state is very strong, not only in its police and army but in the extent to which citizens defer to it. With a twenty-year monopoly on power, the Nationalists



Willson, The Observer (London)
"Of Course, It's Purely for Self-Defense"

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have learned and used many devices for justifying apartheid and making it seem worth some sacrifice. British sale of arms, and possible ties to NATO, would seem to demonstrate that domestic political civility is not the price of international acceptability.

A reasoned United States foreign policy, manifested at this time of potential flexibility in South Africa, could help to move the debate off center, though its impact should not be overestimated. After the lesson of Vietnam, it is obviously unrealistic to expect the United States to use much of its political or military power to alter in any significant way the racial policies of South Africa. At the same time, the United States must recognize that South Africa presents an explosive situation into which major world powers can be drawn. Lacking an intelligently formulated and articulated foreign policy, the United States may find itself uncomfortably tied to and identified with South Africa, either through its own failure to act or through the actions of its allies. Recognizing the dynamics involved in the strengthened black African nations, in the fears of Soviet influence in the Indian Ocean, in the displacement of colonial strength in Africa, and in the dangers of carrying the cold war to Africa, the U.S. Government should make certain that it preserves its freedom of action.

During the Nixon Administration, there has been more willingness among America's allies to consider a special relationship between South Africa and NATO. As to the proposed sale of arms to South Africa, the United States is taking no public stand, which to many black Africans seems an endorsement. Asked what the United States had done to halt British arms sales, an experienced State Department official extremely well-informed in South African affairs said, "We have made it clear to the British that we will not sell arms to South Africa." Further questions revealed that no other action had been taken. A few British sources have noted that American parts are used in some of the arms which the Conservative government originally planned to sell—a point to which Congressional groups will need to be attentive. In recent months, the Administration has reversed U.S. policy and allowed the sale of executive jet aircraft to the South African military. And the United States has a center for missile tracking in South Africa.

Moreover, the leaders of black African nations most critical of South Africa have not been viewed sympathetically by the Administration. For example, when Kenneth Kaunda of Zambia left the United States he was in a fury over the way in which he had been treated in October 1970. Secretary William Rogers did not visit Tanzania, South Africa's strongest critic, when he toured Africa in 1970, nor did Assistant Secretary of State David Newsom on his African trip last year. Meantime, American aid to Tanzania has been very modest.

The United States should develop a foreign policy more harmonious with its long-range aims. This means using its resources to press for change in the racial policies of the South African Government. Such a course would be consistent with improving prospects for tranquillity at home, with keeping the cold war out of Africa, and with maintaining a position of dignity and idealism among nations. There are several ways in which the U.S. Government can make its influence felt.

The most important immediate area of American action is to restrain its close ally, Great Britain, from gestures of support for the South African Government. High British officials in the Foreign Office and military circles have never been convinced that British power, combined with that of South Africa, could deter Soviet intentions in the Indian Ocean. Moreover, Lord Carrington, the British Defense Minister, has long had reservations about the policy. And Sir Alec Douglas-Home, the Foreign Secretary, who originally proposed the arms sales, now has misgivings. But Edward Heath is left hanging on a limb and cannot easily get down, as powerful elements in the Conservative Party are insisting that the government carry through with its promise to South Africa. By applying firm public and private pressure on Heath, the U.S. Govenment could assist him to avoid the worst blunder in British foreign policy since Suez.

Second, the Administration should reverse its policy of downgrading the role of the United Nations. In this respect, Washington has established a lead which its major ally is now following. Whereas the Labour government placed a cabinet minister at the head of its U.N. delegation, Mr. Heath has named a civil servant.

Third, within the U.N. the United States should use its influence to extract South West Africa from the administration of South Africa. South Africa's interest in South West Africa is tied directly to helping the Portuguese retain their hold over oil-rich Angola. South Africa is more dependent on the import of oil than of any other basic commodity. An effective ace in the hole against a blockade or embargo of South Africa is Portuguese Angola, and Angola is more likely to continue under Portuguese domination if South Africa, by controlling South West Africa, can for all practical purposes have a common border with Angola.

The issue of South West Africa cannot be viewed in isolation from the rest of Africa, as some American officials, knowing almost nothing about tropical Africa, tend to do. As long as South West Africa is under the control of a government committed to apartheid, most African governments will remain dedicated to seeing the area achieve its independence. As a result, the issue remains potentially explosive. Certainly, the movement for the independence of South West Africa will grow during this decade. And the sooner independence is granted, the less likely is it that violence will erupt in the area or that this issue will complicate relations between the United States and other outside powers.

Fourth, more financial aid to Lesotho, Botswana and Swaziland—virtual economic enclaves of South Africa—would help to strengthen these client states, and show black Africa as well as South Africa that the United States is very much concerned about apartheid. At present, many South Africans point to these poor states as evidence that black Africans cannot manage their own affairs. This country has been willing to help white Berlin become a showplace inside the Communist world, but Americans have shown little interest in assisting these black states to become islands of development within the heart of South Africa. The peoples of these three

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countries desperately need technical and financial assistance from the United States.

Fifth, American firms operating in South Africa should be encouraged to pay wages to nonwhites up to the maximum level permitted by South African law. A few firms have done so, but most do not.

Finally, whatever encouragement can be given to the courageous critics within South Africa, however few they may be, should be forthcoming. Too often, Americans dismiss all white South Africans as equally objectionable, as beyond the pale of communication. It is important for Americans to realize that courageous journalists, professors, students and many others frequently risk everything in their fight against apartheid. Lines of communication with these people should be improved. Not only private citizens but American universities, foundations and academic societies can do much to keep dissent alive.

These steps, while probably doing little to alter South Africa in the predictable future, will surely do a great deal to prevent the United States from stumbling blindly, unthinkingly, down the garden path chosen by its allies. The Indochina imbroglio inherited from the French, and the Middle East complications stemming in part from the invasion of Suez, should be adequate to alert the U.S. Government that its interests, for the whole of Africa, must not be defined or frozen by the government of Edward Heath or any other ally. □

TROOPS AND PRISONERS

HOW TO BRING THEM ALL HOME

REP. ROBERT L. LEGGETT

Mr. Leggett has been a member of the House of Representatives, serving the Fourth Congressional District of California, since 1962. He is a member of the House Armed Services Committee.

"As long as there are American POWs in North Vietnam we will have to maintain a residual force in South Vietnam. That is the least that we can negotiate for."
—*President Richard Nixon (Mar. 4, 1971)*

"We are going to maintain a United States presence until a satisfactory solution can be worked out for the prisoners of war."
—*Secretary of Defense Melvin Laird (Dec. 15, 1970)*

"In case the United States Government declares it will withdraw from South Vietnam all its troops . . . by June 30, 1971, the people's liberation forces will refrain from attacking the withdrawing troops of the United States . . . and the parties will engage at once in discussions on . . . the question of releasing captured military men."
—*Vietcong Chief Negotiator Mrs. Nguyen Thi Binh (Sept. 17, 1970)*

Washington

We won't get out until we're sure they'll give the POWs back. They won't settle the POW question until they're sure we're getting out. So why not do both at once?

We want our prisoners back, and have no use for a permanent military presence in Southeast Asia. The other side wants us out of Southeast Asia, and has no long-term use for its American prisoners. So let us accommodate each other.

Together with my colleague Donald Riegle (R., Mich.), I have developed a plan, called "proportional repatriation," that would enable us to withdraw all of our troops and *simultaneously* recover all of our POWs. The plan is fair to both sides. It is feasible, and as nearly foolproof and cheatproof as a settlement of this kind of war can be. It is more favorable to our national interest than any other settlement we are likely to get, in that it brings a prompt end to our part of the war and a prompt return of the POWs.

Its basic provisions have been endorsed by twenty-five members of Congress and were sent to President Nixon on January 2. He has not responded as of the time of this writing. This article is the first public discussion of the details of the plan.

The crux of the plan is an agreement between the United States and the three forces that comprise the other side (North Vietnam, the NLF and the Pathet Lao) to repatriate all American POWs and withdraw all American troops in equal percentage installments.

Suppose, for example, that the other side holds 700 American POWs. Suppose further that at the time the plan were put into effect, 300,000 American troops were in Southeast Asia. Every time the other side returned 10 per cent of the POWs it held, which would be seventy prisoners, we would withdraw 10 per cent of our troops, which would be 30,000 men.

North Vietnam, the NLF, and/or the Pathet Lao would turn the seventy POWs over to an intermediary, which would be an international agency or a neutral nation that both sides found acceptable. The intermediary would hold the men until it verified that 30,000 American military personnel had actually left Vietnam. Then it would release the POWs to American hands.

This process would be repeated at regular intervals, perhaps every two weeks or every month, until all POWs were returned and all American troops were out of Southeast Asia. The exact schedule, to which both sides would make a public commitment, would be decided at the Paris negotiating table. The schedule would have to specify a date by which the last prisoner would be returned and the last soldier withdrawn. There is no reason why it should be later than Christmas Day of this year.

The first question which comes to mind regarding an agreement with a Communist power is, "Can we trust them?" We can't—any more than they trust us—but it doesn't matter. International agreements are not built on

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trust but on self-interest. We can be confident the other fellows will keep their part of this bargain because they know it's in their interest to do so—provided we clearly commit ourselves to getting out. The importance of a commitment to withdraw by a specified date cannot be overemphasized. The other side has repeatedly indicated that nothing less will induce it to release the POWs.

Offers to exchange North Vietnamese prisoners for American prisoners are futile, no matter how favorable the exchange ratio. The other side doesn't want its men back badly enough to trade the only bargaining card it holds. The American POWs are North Vietnam's only assurance that we won't adopt Curtis LeMay's strategy of "bombing them back to the Stone Age"; Hanoi has repeatedly indicated that it won't give them up unless it gets American withdrawal in return.

Letters-to-Hanoi campaigns, Ross Perot's airplane trips, and so forth, may secure better treatment and improve the mail flow for the prisoners, although the bombing halt has probably made the greatest contribution in this regard. But not all the letters and Veterans Day speeches in the world will get the men back.

Nor should we deceive ourselves that partial withdrawal will get us anywhere. The other side is most unlikely to trade half the POWs for a 50 per cent withdrawal, or even 95 per cent of the POWs for a 95 per cent withdrawal; a partial withdrawal does not alter our basic commitment to determine who will govern South Vietnam. The American military presence in Vietnam is an all-or-nothing proposition. If we leave even 1,000 men there, concern for their safety commits us to support them, in the event of an ARVN collapse, with whatever reinforcements would be necessary to prevent their being overrun by enemy troops. Recent experience in Cambodia suggests that such reinforcements would be used to save not only the American troops but the Saigon government as well.

In the eyes of North Vietnam and the NLF, a withdrawal capable of being reversed would probably constitute no significant change from our present policy. The North Vietnamese and the NLF consider themselves to have been badly burned by the 1954 settlement. As they see it, they allowed themselves at that time to be negotiated out of their battle-won right to rid Vietnam of foreign control. They have repeatedly demonstrated their determination not to let this happen again, but to fight on—indefinitely, if need be—until all foreign forces have gone home.

So the only meaningful withdrawal is complete withdrawal. We can continue to supply Saigon with military aid, just as China and the Soviet Union supply the other side; but if we are serious about getting the POWs back, we must withdraw all American military personnel of all kinds from Southeast Asia. No more combat troops, no more support troops, no more advisers, no more air or artillery strikes, no more looking toward a "Korean solution." In short, we must put the Saigon government on a sink-or-swim basis.

There seems no reason why this shouldn't be done at once. The Saigon government has had the benefit of sixteen years of American training, more than 130 billion American dollars, and more than 45,000 American lives. Its army outnumbers the combined forces of the NLF and North Vietnam by more than 5 to 1, and the ratio of dollar value of military equipment is even more favorable. If we are to believe the advocates of Vietnamization, the other side is debilitated, demoralized, and decimated, its fighting forces consisting primarily of preteen-agers and old men. If, after we have done so much for it, the Saigon government enjoys so little popular support that it is unable to hold its own, further effort on our part would be wasted.

But above all, we are faced with a choice between saving our POWs and continuing to protect Thieu and Ky from their moment of truth. We cannot do both.

In order to demonstrate good faith, and to safeguard against the possibility of cheating, each side would have to take certain steps, openly and publicly, before proportional repatriation could begin.

The other side would:

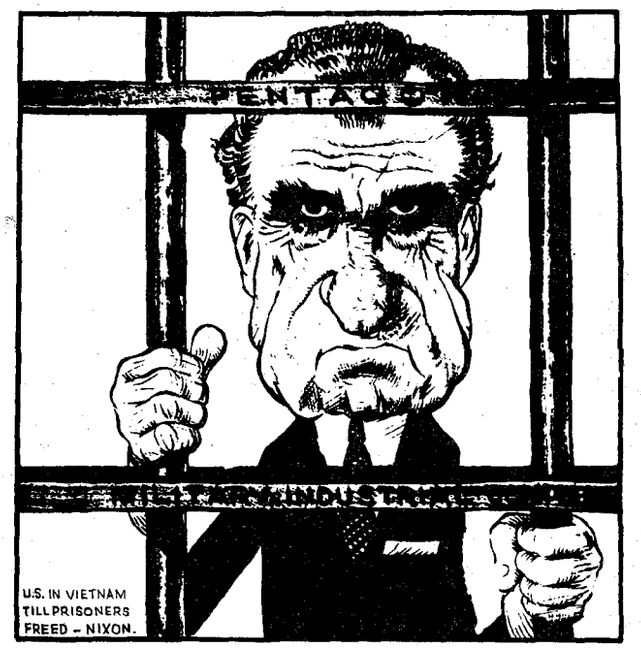
¶Publish a complete list of all the prisoners it held, including a description of each man's physical condition. (The list the North Vietnamese recently gave Senator Kennedy did not include descriptions of condition, there is some doubt as to its completeness, and of course it could not include men captured after the list was compiled. No lists at all have been released by the NLF or the Pathet Lao.)

¶Publish a list of men who died in captivity, including date and cause of death.

¶Agree to allow the intermediary to run unannounced checks and inspections to satisfy itself that there were not more POWs than were publicly admitted.

¶Agree to repatriate prisoners in order of the length of their captivity, with the exception that those in serious need of medical attention would be returned first.

¶Agree to send all Chinese and Russian military advisers out of North Vietnam, and to permit the intermediary to verify that this had been done. If the Saigon army is to



Macpherson, Toronto Star

The Old Con

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carry on without outside advisers, it is fair that the other side do the same.

¶Agree to refrain from initiating military action against departing American troops. (This calls merely for a reaffirmation of Madame Binh's statement of September 17.)

In return, the United States would:

¶Agree to continue to publicize the number of its troops remaining in Vietnam, as we have done in the past.

¶Agree to publicize the number of American troops in all of Southeast Asia, in order that they could be included in the proportional withdrawal schedules.

¶Agree to allow the intermediary to inspect our books and run whatever other checks it felt were necessary to verify that we did not have more troops in Southeast Asia than publicly admitted, and that we were not rotating in more men than we were taking out.

Both sides would agree to accept the intermediary as final judge of alleged violations of the agreement.

Certain questions naturally come to mind with respect to proportional repatriation:

What do we do if they offer to release all the POWs immediately? We accept. We get our men out as fast as we can load them onto planes. Meanwhile, the POWs will have been turned over to the intermediary, and we'll have no further worries about their medical care or living conditions. It might take us a month to fly all the troops out of Southeast Asia; the difference between this and a year of continued fighting will be more than 2,500 American lives. We'll have to abandon several billion dollars worth of equipment that we'd prefer to dismantle and evacuate, but lives are more important than computers and aluminum runways.

What do we do if they don't offer to release any POWs? If they reject proportional repatriation because of a specific detail, such as the date for total withdrawal, we'll at least have a basis for meaningful negotiations. It's inconceivable to me that they would reject the plan out of hand, but if they did we'd simply be back where we are now.

Isn't it possible that the other side could keep unacknowledged prisoners hidden in remote camps where the inspectors might never find them? That is possible no matter what course we follow. Even if we were to invade and occupy all of Southeast Asia, the opposition might still keep a number of American prisoners hidden away deep in the jungle. Proportional repatriation minimizes the possibility by providing the strongest possible incentive not to cheat.

The Vietnamese who hold our men prisoners have been fighting almost continuously for thirty years to drive foreigners out of their country. Agreement on proportional repatriation would set the date of final success only months away. No matter how carefully they hid the prisoners, the possibility of being found out could never be completely eliminated. The last thing in the world they would want to do would be to jeopardize the withdrawal of American troops by violating the agreement.

What do we do if they attack us as we're leaving, creating another Dunkirk? Attacks on withdrawing American troops would violate the proportional repatriation agreement, as well as the present stated policy of North Vietnam and the NLF. It is always implicit that we shall do whatever is necessary to protect our troops. It would be incredibly stupid of the North Vietnamese or the Vietcong to hamper our withdrawal in this way, and they know it.

How do we know they won't play along with us for a while, then abrogate the agreement before they've returned all the POWs? We know they won't do so because if they did we'd come out ahead. Partial repatriation is of considerable value to us but, to reiterate, partial American withdrawal is of very little value to them.

How do they know we won't play along with them for a while, then abrogate the agreement before we've pulled out all our troops? They know that the domestic political penalties falling upon a President who did this would be prohibitive. Current polls show the American people favoring, by margins ranging between 2 to 1 and 3 to 1, legislation to compel total withdrawal within one year—even if we don't get the POWs back. Once the withdrawal date was set, public support for ending the war would become even greater. Nothing could persuade the American people to re-elect a President who then reversed course and plunged us back into the quagmire we had almost escaped.

Don't we have an obligation to stay in order to prevent the blood bath that might follow a Communist victory? First, the behavior of the Thieu-Ky government has given no reason for confidence that the blood bath which might follow a Communist victory would be any greater than that which might follow an *anti-Communist* victory. The post-civil-war blood bath in Asia is hardly peculiar to communism, as the victorious Indonesian anti-Communists demonstrated a few years ago, when they put nearly half a million Communists and alleged Communists to the sword.

Second, the worst blood bath of all is that which we create by staying and prolonging a war which the Vietnamese would have settled among themselves years ago.

Third, the South Vietnamese people themselves expressed their feelings on this matter last summer in a poll, conducted by the Pentagon East, which found 65 per cent wanting all Americans out of their country, 5 per cent wanting the Americans to stay, and 30 per cent undecided. (Despite attempts to suppress the poll, the irrepressible Sen. Stephen Young of Ohio, now unfortunately retired, found it out and read the results into the *Congressional Record.*)

We don't recognize either the National Liberation Front or the Pathet Lao as independent agents. What do we do if they refuse to negotiate through the North Vietnamese, and instead insist on separate settlements? If we can get our men back by separate settlements, then let's make separate settlements. Between them, the NLF and the Pathet Lao hold eighty-two known American prisoners, and may hold up to 700 more. The freedom of even eighty-two men is more important than whatever debating points can be gained by refusing to concede the independence of these groups.

How about a military solution to the POW problem? Why don't we resume heavy bombing, or perhaps conduct more raids such as the one on Sontay? The North Vietnamese have already proved that they respond to heavy bombing in the same way as did the citizens of London and Berlin during World War II. Bombing doesn't make

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will probably tear them down when the blacks—as 21 million have done in the last generation—move on to Los Angeles, or Chicago, or New York.

It's a situation you can find all across the South. Does it sound like an emergency? Nothing—nothing at all—in the federal housing programs, for all their billions of dollars, has been aimed at improving these conditions.

The country folk have been living that way a long while and nobody in Washington has much cared. Sixty per cent of the nation's poor live out there, and less than 15 per cent of HUD's low-income housing goes to them. That may not be too fine a record, but it is as good as the record established by FDR and his supposedly big-hearted Brain Trusters. They did have a couple of good programs—buying land and chopping it up into small farms, and building on these plots houses which ex-tenant farmers and sharecroppers could rent at a very small fee until they could afford to buy them. However the New Dealers put little money into these programs, and even less courage. When Sen. Harry Byrd found out that some of the assisted folk were using their bathtubs as storage bins, he said they weren't fit to be helped. Then Rep. Harold Cooley of North Carolina (later infamous as the friend of the sugar lobby) held a Congressional investigation that concluded the housing programs were run by, in one Congressman's word, "thousands of utopian planners who were hellbent on remaking the United States into a Communist state." The New Dealers decided it wasn't worth fighting about, and that was the end of that.

But because the big farmers needed a place to get loans for such things as irrigation projects, and because small-town businessmen wanted to borrow money to set up country clubs, the Farmers Home Administration was established in 1949. It also had authority to make rural housing loans, only it didn't do so. From 1950 to 1965, Farmers Home made just 106,000 housing loans, which is hardly worth mentioning, inasmuch as an estimated million rural homes needed to be replaced every year. In 1955 it made no loans at all.

It's doing better now. Last year it made about 76,000 loans, some for new homes and some for patching. That is about one-tenth the pace necessary to keep up with the need. Naturally, although rural blacks needed housing help more than any other group, they were ignored as much as possible. An eight-member survey team for the NAACP, after making an 80-mile tour of the Montgomery, Ala., area last November, reported that they were unable to find "a single person who had ever even heard of the Farmers Home Administration." John Hulett, the black sheriff of Lowndes County, Alabama, said whites are routinely given information about what loan programs are available, but blacks are never told.

The only nongovernmental outfit that takes a steady interest in rural housing is the Rural Housing Alliance, a thirty-five-man lobby funded by the usual variety of foundations. Its research director, George Rucker, points out that in Farmers Home's banner year only "about 5 per cent of the loans go to those with incomes of $3,000 or less. There are no loans to help the person with only a few bucks in his pocket."

Farmers Home makes loans for as little as 1 per cent interest, based on income and size of family. A family with $3,600 income and four kids would qualify for an $8,000 mortgage, no more. It may be possible to put up a very small home in the South for that price, but it isn't easy; in other parts of the country it's impossible. Farmers Home in Michigan said last year that the lowest possible price for building a new home in that state was $18,000.

In the name of good living, Farmers Home refuses to help poor farm families live better. As Rogers Morris of Tufts-Delta points out: "You can't get a loan for a house without inside plumbing, a modern bathroom, a modern kitchen, a link to a sewer system or a cesspool. Farmers Home doesn't want you to live like that, which means that the minimum new house it will approve is within your reach only if you make $4,000 or $6,000 a year or more. The Farmers Home Administration thus condemns you to living in your shack, by rejecting your loan application because you are too poor to live in its minimum-standard house."

And yet much could be done for such families without going totally modern. "We believe," he says, "a decent, basic minimum house could be built for $3,000 to $5,000 —with a protected well, a hand pump in the kitchen, a modern sanitary privy in back, decent space, insulation, heating, protection from the elements and vectors [disease-bearing insects] and provision for the addition of an inside bathroom core and kitchen core later if the family became more affluent."

If rural poor can't get shiny indoor plumbing, they

would just as soon have an open sewer pit as a sanitary outdoor toilet—that is one of the perverse legends of the Washington housing bureaucracy. Another legend that has been hanging around for forty years or more is that only farmers live in rural areas. Not until the early 1960s did Farmers Home make housing loans to people who weren't farmers, and until 1970 it didn't make loans to anyone living in towns of more than 5,500 population (now inhabitants of 10,000-population towns can get loans). And inasmuch as the Federal Housing Administration virtually ceases to operate below the 25,000-population level, the folks in towns of between 10,000 and 25,000 are left with almost no place to go for their housing loans. Since Farmers Home was authorized nine years ago to O.K. loans for farm labor housing, it has financed only 7,400 units—which

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takes care of maybe 2 per cent of the need. In Florida, where the federal government has spent more on housing for farm labor than it has in any other state—a grand average of about $10 per worker per year—the University of Miami found that two out of every five farm labor houses, occupied by an average of five people, had neither toilet nor place to bathe.

That sort of thing doesn't happen by accident. It is partly the result of Farmers Home's high regard for red tape. Clay Cochran, chairman of the Rural Housing Alliance, says that in Putnam County, Florida, by using VISTA workers and OEO funds, his outfit built a demonstration house worth about $7,500, which they offered to sell for $4,600 to a woman with a decent credit record who had five children of her own and two grandchildren to house. She had been living in a shack. At the minimum interest rate of 1 per cent, the cost of paying off the mortgage plus fire insurance would have come to less than $20 a month. When Cochran tried to process her application for a loan through Farmers Home, this, he says, is what happened:

> They rejected her application on the grounds (*1*) that she owned a lot—the one on which her old shack stood; and (*2*) that they could not make the loan to someone who was largely (or entirely, as one letter said) dependent on welfare. (About $1,200 of her income is from Aid to Families with Dependent Children; the other $600 from fruit picking.) When the Rural Housing Alliance put pressure on Farmers Home, it abandoned these arguments. But this poor woman did not get a loan, because when all the chips were down and the regulations perused and the files cluttered with appeals, Farmers Home came down hard on the point that she could not in fact afford any kind of a house. We were told she should go to public housing instead. Inquiry revealed, unsurprisingly, that (*1*) there was no public housing unit available; and (*2*) if it had been, the cost would have been $32 a month compared to $20 for the home we were prepared to sell her.

Is Congress aware of what's going on out there in the sticks? Generally, no. Last year, when Nebraska Gov. Norbert Tiemann appeared before the House Banking subcommittee on housing to plead for more low-cost money for his rural people, Rep. Leonor Sullivan chopped him off with, "Well, let me tell you the rural areas are being taken care of by the Farmers Home Administration." This would have stood as perhaps the least sensitive remark of the last session of Congress, but it was immediately topped by Rep. William A. Barrett, chairman of the Housing subcommittee, who hooted at Tiemann's complaints: "Now, certainly, we have that sector completely satisfied."

Not that the federal government has been single-minded in its efforts to make rural areas difficult to live in; it has also been helping to bring the same quality of life to the cities, where its housing money has most noticeably been spent to remove architectural character and to support ugliness. Urban renewal money has not only destroyed thousands of low-income housing but also wiped out, since 1933, at least half the 12,000 buildings listed in the Historic American Buildings Survey as worth preserving.

In support of ugliness, the federal government uses the urban poor (through Social Security and welfare) as a conduit for subsidizing mostly substandard housing. Having spent billions of dollars building public housing where it shouldn't have been built and where it was bound to decay, Washington has now become untimely thrifty in helping to maintain it. Five hundred of the 2,500 public housing authorities are losing money; two dozen of the big city housing authorities are in serious financial condition; three—Washington, Newark, St. Louis—could go bankrupt. Lacking the money to keep their warrens in good shape and safe against roaming thugs of the neighborhood, other housing authorities may arrive at the ultimate irony described not long ago in *The New York Times* by John Herbers: "In the midst of an acute housing shortage, St. Louis is boarding up Pruitt-Igoe, twenty-six eleven-story apartment buildings, part of a $36-million housing project built fifteen years ago and not yet paid for. . . . Almost from the beginning, it was a disaster—socially, architecturally and financially. Various efforts over the years to make it work have failed. It is now a scene of vast devastation. The poorest of the poor would rather live in a dilapidated hut than endure the housing project's concentrated misery. And a destitute housing authority is left with the ruins. . . . Everyone now agrees it concentrated too much social disorder and poverty into one place under adverse conditions." Now HUD is talking about razing Pruitt-Igoe and replacing it with garden apartments and row houses!

This sort of thing comes from thirty-three years of federal indifference to what the local power blocs did with their public housing projects in terms of design, placement, maintenance and policing. The results have been appalling so often that now, when Secretary Romney talks of getting the middle-class suburbs to share their space with future housing projects, resistance is adamant.

Except in the very worst public-housing projects, where raping and mugging are the order of the day, these dreary places are nevertheless greatly preferable to some of the alternatives—alternatives which, if nothing else, show the kinship between the rural areas and the inner cities. Many Southern blacks must feel quite at home when they reach New York City and again sleep four or five to a bed. Sometimes the tenements have no heat and in hundreds of cases the newcomers wind up once again living as squatters, this time in buildings abandoned by slumlords who no longer find them useful for tax deductions.

Squatting is widespread. In the District of Columbia, which has a shortage of housing for low-income people, more than 5,000 houses are boarded up. Some families have taken the boards off and moved in with the rats. There is no heat and no electricity, but it's better than the sidewalk. The same thing is happening in many big cities, most especially New York, as dramatically described by *The Wall Street Journal*: "On a dark night six months ago, a shadowy figure stood before a dilapidated, abandoned apartment building on Manhattan's upper West Side. Lifting a crowbar, he wrenched loose the sheet metal nailed over the door of the dingy building. Then he ushered his wife and their five children inside. That's how José Rivera found a home . . . 'seized with the law of the crowbar.' "

The amount of attention Washington has been giving to inner-city housing problems over the years, including its

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most recent housing budgets, is such as to prompt Mayor John Lindsay to describe the total not as an emergency response to an emergency situation but "simply a joke."

The government has not failed from lack of ability. When it really wants to build homes, then homes are built. Without a ruffle and without a second glance at the budget, it turned out a splendid housing tract for South Vietnamese military families, of which Sen. Stuart Symington took note: "It seems incredible that we could go into a program to build 20,000 homes for military families in a foreign country, when in my home town of St. Louis last year we built fourteen single-family homes." Indeed it was so incredible that I called Ted Voss, head of Research and Statistics at the Department of Housing and Urban Development, to see if Symington wasn't stretching things a bit. But no, it was true: while 7,846 privately financed housing units received building permits in the St. Louis metropolitan area during the period in question, only fourteen of those were inside the city limits.

It is not just a matter of priorities but of a long-time, deliberate withholding of help. Mayor Lindsay says it is one of the notable "postwar corruptions" that "the country and Congress have thought there was something indecent about assisting people in inner cities." This has been obvious for so many years that housing officials, though now insisting the policy has changed, speak quite candidly about the federal bureaucracy's conscious subversion of city life. "Until 1964," says Romney, "only about 3 per cent of all existing homes purchased with FHA-insured mortgages were in blighted central city areas. As a matter of fact, we had that red-line policy [to exclude the inner city]. The FHA up until that time had been identified with housing middle-class America. Its standards had been developed to reflect middle-class incomes and middle-class response to the responsibilities of home ownership."

FHA may be trying to change, but the ring of middle-class whites it helped lock around the city appears to be rather permanent. In a description that could apply to many of the larger cities, Mayor Henry Maier of Milwaukee blames "the relatively wealthy of the metropolitan area for an incarceration program of keeping the poor in the city. And the metropolitan hypocrites who are liberal on Afghanistan are only too happy to have the poor incarcerated in the city, so they can continually preach to them that they should be doing more for themselves."

New York City Housing Administrator Albert A. Walsh adds: "It's a vicious circle. Our cities have become the home for the poor, minorities, the aged, handicapped, sick, underemployed and unemployed. To solve the housing needs of these families, we build low- and moderate-income housing, which then attracts even more of these families and individuals—causing a greater need for more housing. In the meantime the suburbs become more affluent, white, young, healthy and income-producing."

With the inner cities facing total decay, the FHA got religion about three years ago. Indeed, it got frenzied religion. In 1967 HUD Asst. Secy. P. N. Brownstein said: "The principal reason for the existence of the FHA is to enlist and encourage private enterprise to play a leading role in providing decent housing for families of low and moderate income, and in providing housing and related human conditions in the inner city—especially in the slums and blighted portions of the inner city." Accompanying its unnatural zeal was an easing of its appraisal policies. It started making loans on rattletrap buildings.

And soon FHA's new resolve to help the inner city had been perverted. In came the suede-shoe speculators, inflating prices far above true value or unloading property that was so defective that some cities have condemned it within a year after the FHA O.K.d it for a loan. FHA's Section 235 program, recently in the news because of that kind of crookedness, is increasingly failing in its original purpose, which was to subsidize homes for people in the $3,500-to-$5,000 income range. The subsidies are now shifting, says Romney, "toward those families with incomes between $6,000 to $9,000—the top of the income range made eligible by Congress."

And even he understands why: it doesn't matter if the federal government does subsidize all but 1 per cent of the interest (as is done under Section 235). If the program requires the family to pay for the home's maintenance, the utilities, the principal and that 1 per cent, it is often too much for the 5 million families earning less than $3,000 a year, the 6 million families earning between $3,000 and $5,000 a year, and many of the 3 million families earning between $5,000 and $6,000.

In 1968, families earning less than $6,000 a year paid $7 billion in taxes. Which means that, although they can't take advantage of subsidized housing, they are helping to support the subsidy for wealthier people.

Yet life is not so rosy for the suburban home buyer. It was his housing troubles that FDR's adviser, Archibald MacLeish, had in mind thirty-five years ago when he damned "the exorbitant rates of financing, the obstructive tactics of labor, and the complications and stupidity of the building codes and taxing laws." These are still the chief complaints, with most of the blame laid to the quadrupling of land prices in the last twenty years (encouraged by capital-gains tax favoritism) and a doubling of financing costs, each extra percentage point costing $6,500 on a thirty-year $25,000 mortgage.

But in putting together the Housing Act of 1970 Congress coped with none of these problems in a substantive way. Within the industry you will find, without looking very closely, that most of the proposals for easing the housing crisis are based, not on the builder's taking less profit nor on the bank's taking less profit but on the consumer's accepting shoddier or skimpier merchandise.

Richard T. Wright, president of the Metropolitan Washington Builders Association, says that low- and moderate-income housing can become a reality only if homeowners are willing to "settle for less," and he explains (he speaks for a growing group of builders) that less means a tub instead of a shower, and skip the tile; skip the garbage disposal; use cheaper window units; skip all trim, inside and out; install no doors inside the house except for one bedroom and the single bathroom; skip the closet doors; skip the gutters; skip the air conditioning.

No doors inside? Remember how the doorless closets of the public-housing projects of the 1930s were used as the symbol of abject sleazy poverty? Well, it looks as though the middle-income people are about to get some

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of the same treatment now, in the name of economy.

By returning to the simple life in this fashion, Wright estimates, the buyer would save $2,000. (He could save much more if the interest rate were cut 1 per cent.) Apparently the breakthrough to less of everything is happening all over. Levitt & Sons is said to be turning out a $24,000 house on Long Island that features an unfinished second floor. Yeonas Company, one of the nation's largest home builders, wants to develop subdivisions without the usual street, sewer and water facilities. They call it "natural drainage"; there would be no curbs and the streets would be narrower. In some areas of the country, Yeonas officials claim, that kind of subdivision designing, plus plastic pipes and other material shortcuts, is the only way to keep the homes as low as $25,000. Some builders will be producing homes this year that are up to a third smaller than the ones they were marketing two years ago.

In the cast of this tragicomedy, one final comment should be made about that minor character actor—HUD, the clown. Its Operation Breakthrough—launched in June 1969, to complete the development of low-cost housing by the use of experimental materials and methods—was last heard of, a year behind schedule, still breaking ground.

HUD's specialty is paper work and the development of application forms. If the federal government can't turn out houses, Walsh recently observed, it certainly is good at producing "red tape, reams and reams of reports, endless lists of recommendations, hundreds and hundreds of amendments to laws. It takes a team of experts just to decide what program should be used to house a specific income group."

Without exaggerating in the slightest, Walsh illustrates the unintelligible metaphysics of government housing regulations: "In the rent supplement program, the family's income cannot exceed public-housing entry limits, but $300 is deducted from gross income for each child. In the 236 moderate-income rental program, income eligibility is usually 135 per cent of public-housing entry levels, with a $300 deduction for each child plus an additional 5 per cent deduction for normal expenses. The 211 (d) (3) program has its own income limits established by the federal government, but the 236 program can, in certain circumstances, use 90 per cent of these limits as its eligibility limits." Got it?

If there is one thing that could take the restrictive pressures off housing, it is an ample supply of cheap money. During the past Congress, a couple of efforts were made to establish a procedure for getting cheap money into the housing market, and it is instructive to review what happened to them.

One proposal, by Sen. William Proxmire, was to require the Federal Reserve Board to pump money into the mortgage market through the federal discount window at 6 per cent interest, with the stipulation that it be passed on to the home buyer through the banks or savings and loans institutions at 7 per cent.

Proxmire got his proposal through committee, but then he ran into trouble. Federal Reserve Board Chairman Arthur Burns personally conducted a massive lobbying campaign before the bill hit the floor of the Senate and convinced key members that if the Fed were required to channel some of its credit to social ends, why, the United States would be converted into a communistic state, the currency would be "debased," and the Fed would be involved in politics (as though it isn't already). He won and Proxmire lost.

The other suggestion was to make the banks put into a "housing bank" a very small portion of the pension funds they hold in trust. This housing bank, in turn, would make loans at very low interest. But the bankers saw that, too, as setting an extremely dangerous precedent. If the people got started directing their own credit supply, well, who knows where it might end? As Dr. Oliver H. Jones, executive vice president of the Mortgage Bankers Association, put it: "We can see housing is hurting and we like to see housing and mortgage finance healthy. But if we set this precedent now, in 1972 we may be requiring pension funds and others to invest in air pollution corporations."

That is pretty horrible to contemplate. □

DOMESTIC AMBUSH

LAWN MOWERS & OTHER KILLERS

STANLEY KLEIN
Mr. Klein, formerly a writer for Machine Design, *is now a writer for the* New York Post *and science editor for Radio Station WEVD.*

While in the backyard of her home this past June, an upstate New York woman, Mrs. Eleanor Pangburn, all of a sudden slumped to the ground, dead. A stone, shot from under a rotary power lawn mower being operated by a neighbor, had severed her spinal cord.

A New York physician, Dr. James M. Dennis, on reading of Mrs. Pangburn's "accident," wrote an impassioned letter to his Congressman. "Rotary power lawn mowers have killed two people in the small village of Clyde within the past three years. . . . I am at present treating a patient who has been disabled for over a year with a broken leg as a result of being struck by a stone in the manner similar to the recent fatal accident. In my practice as a physician, I have seen many other persons injured by power mowers with varying degrees of disability.

"These machines represent a glaring example of the way in which we are being killed by our conveniences. The problem falls somewhere in the area of public safety and consumer protection and should be amenable to control by law and regulation."

In 1969, the rotary mower caused 140,000 injuries, according to the Department of Health, Education and Welfare. "The statistic is conservative," says William

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White, executive director of the now expired National Commission on Product Safety, and a former Public Health Service official who specialized in the prevention of home accidents. About 70 per cent of the injuries are gruesome lacerations, amputations and fractures caused by direct contact with the mower's whirling blade which, at the tip, whirls at speeds up to 200 miles per hour. Most of the remainder, as in Mrs. Pangburn's case, result from ejected objects.

This toll in human flesh is not only a story of one industry that is careless for the safety of those exposed to its intrinsically dangerous machine (one of its safety programs was labeled a "fraud" by the product safety commission). It also typifies the inadequate role given to safety in the design and sale of many household gadgets.

To describe the threat that products impose on the physical security of the homestead, commission Chairman Arnold B. Elkind employs the word "menacing." It is a myth, he says, "for anyone to view the home and its environs as any more a sanctuary free of potential violence than are the highways or the streets." He calls the American home an "unsuspected booby trap."

Unreasonably dangerous products abound, Elkind's commission found, in even the most commonplace of consumer goods. In many instances, it would have cost "little or nothing to remove or reduce the risk in certain products." Examples include the use of magnetic instead of mechanical door latches on all refrigerators and freezers, to prevent entrapment; the provision of double insulation on all drills, to eliminate shock hazard; the use of better insulation and of only nonflammable parts in color TV sets, to prevent spontaneous fires; the substitution of tempered glass for plain glass in sliding doors; and design modifications in rotary lawn mowers to minimize crippling accidents.

Altogether, the gory picture is of some 20 million Americans each year sufficiently injured by some product to require medical attention. Of these, 30,000 people are killed, and another 110,000 are permanently disabled. The wickedness in this assault and battery is that at least 20 per cent of the casualties could be avoided, or their severity reduced, if greater attention were paid to minimizing hazard in the design and sale of consumer products. Aside from the pain and tragedy, home accidents cost the public $5.5 billion each year in medical fees, hospital charges, lost wages and productivity, and funeral expenses.

The laissez-faire attitude toward product safety, and the resulting damage to consumers, is exemplified by the rotary power lawn mower. According to the National Commission on Product Safety and many other safety experts, the rotary undoubtedly ranks second to the automobile as the most dangerous contrivance commonly purchased by the American suburban household.

A decade after being put on notice by the Public Health Service that the rotary is a killer, the industry has not been able to arrest its lethal tendencies. An annual rate of 55,000 injuries in 1965 has climbed to a predicted 180,000 in 1970—directly in proportion to the number of units in the field. Rotaries now hold 95 per cent of the home mower market.

Back in 1965, the nation's foremost researcher on lawn mower accidents, Prof. L. W. Knapp, head of the accident prevention section of the University of Iowa, had warned the industry: "The problem of injury associated with the rotary lawn mower is not going to lessen in the years ahead . . . unless there are some significant developments. . . ." The New York state legislature twice voted to ban the sale of the mower, but both times the bills were vetoed by Governor Rockefeller.

Alarmed by mounting clamor over its product, the lawn mower manufacturers, through their trade association, the Outdoor Power Equipment Institute (OPEI), revised the industry-wide safety standards in 1968. The OPEI also stepped up its safety education, and initiated a *self-administered* certification program. This included a redesigned safety seal signifying that machines carrying it conformed to the upgraded standards. Toward the end of the 1960s, it thus seemed that the industry had done all it could to make the intrinsically hazardous machine as safe as possible.

Upon examination of the commission's extensive public record, however, much of the new regard for safety turns out to be façade. The commission reported fourteen safety omissions in the 1968 standards. One pertains to an acknowledged common cause of injury—objects thrown from the rear of the machine into the feet and legs of operators—that had been specifically cited by Professor Knapp years ago. The 1968 standards included no provision for an amazingly simple protection device, a trailing shield that would drag on the ground behind the machine. Only one manufacturer on its own offered the feature.

Bertram Strauss, an engineer with Consumers Union, who has followed the evolution of lawn mowers over the past seventeen years, also attacks the 1968 standards. "The new version underplays a great many of the hazards which exist in a lawn mower. . . . Not once in the 1968 instructions do they mention the possibility that debris can be hurled from one of these mowers. In the 1964 version, it was mentioned a great many times." Strauss, whose testimony helped to expose the industry, was himself attacked for doing so—not by industry representatives but by a National Safety Council employee who is a member of the OPEI safety standards committee.

Asked why an industry would skimp on safety features for a dangerous product, Elkind answers: "When you have to rely on the consensus of an industry to achieve a safety standard, that means a small percentage of the affected industry can veto progress. What can cause a manufacturer to vote against an improved standard? You can speculate on a number of reasons: a stockpile of existing parts that would have to be scrapped; a retooling problem or an assembly-line consideration that would involve additional expense; an existing favorable contract to purchase parts. . . . There are many sound business reasons that militate against change."

The commission uncovered still more misdeeds. A staff investigation of 216 rotaries on sale in retail stores revealed that at least one-quarter failed to comply with the minimal standards. Nevertheless, *all the machines bore the safety seal!* This finding "really turned us off with regard to that industry," Elkind recalls. Furthermore, in administering the program, the OPEI had no system for

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verifying compliance or for penalizing offenders, if by chance violations were reported. Of course, there was no provision for the recall of machines.

At a public hearing, Chairman Elkind called the certification activity a "misleading fraud as a guide for the buyer." The commission referred the findings to the Federal Trade Commission, which says it is awaiting the outcome of proposed federal product safety legislation before undertaking any investigation and prosecution of its own. It should be noted that even in cases where responsible manufacturers might want to set industry-wide product standards for safety, they encounter antitrust difficulties when it comes to policing, enforcing and penalizing violators, all of which are functions considered the prerogative of government.

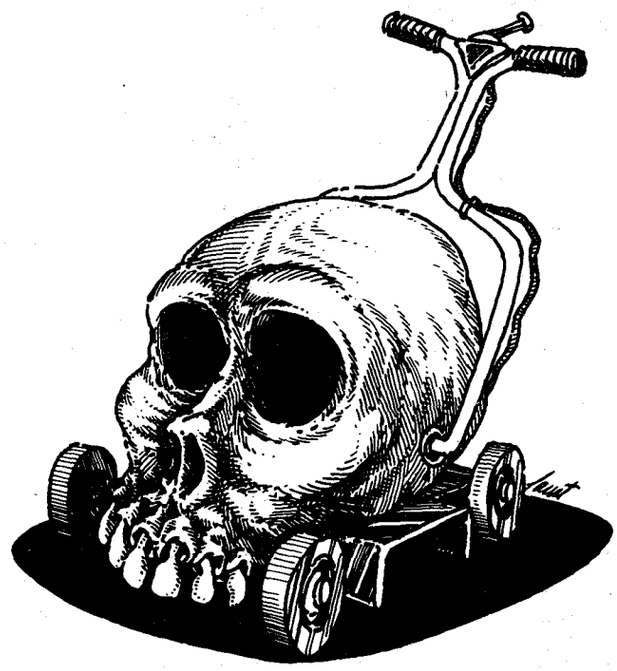
In reaction to the latest round of stinging criticism, the industry last summer put its standards-making operation under the jurisdiction of the American National Standards Association (ANSI), a voluntary body, and contracted with an independent testing laboratory to check mowers for compliance with the standards. The irony is that the same standards that the product safety commission had attacked now take on an aura of even greater credibility. A redesigned safety seal carries an attribution to ANSI as a "national standard." Meanwhile, a year has elapsed since the industry first notified Elkind that it had initiated a "crash program" for further revising its standards.

Many mechanisms do exist for protecting the consumer but, like the technique of industry self-regulation, all are seriously flawed. Safety education campaigns, in the manner of the National Safety Council, are industry's favorite approach because they have the least effect on production operations and profit margins. Too frequently, however, safety education is substituted for more stringent design, and it is ignored in the one situation where safety instruction might pay off—the point of sale. (One retailer told me, when I posed as a shopper, that I was acting like a woman for inquiring about the hazards of the rotary mower.)

Moreover, while trade associations sponsor safety campaigns, an individual manufacturer can counter such public service appeals with promotions that play up hazardous uses of a product that stimulate sales. For example: ads that depict a kid stunting a bike in the way that a cowboy makes his pony rear.

Warning and caution notices, though useful, also have drawbacks as safety measures. In the absence of standards to assure permanence, they can be obliterated when affixed to a durable product. On the other hand, warnings detailed in the literature accompanying a product may be buried in the text or soft-pedaled in tone. For this reason, one large retail chain had to rewrite the literature accompanying its supplier's store-brand appliances. Some warnings are obviously futile: buyers of rotary mowers, for example, are advised to rake their lawn for stones, wire and other debris before cutting the grass.

Insurance companies are a potential force for assuring continuing safety innovations in product design, but few, according to commission testimony, carry out effective casualty reduction programs, and none provides public warnings on particularly dangerous models or brands.



Liability insurance can even reduce a manufacturer's willingness to remove hazards—as long as damage awards are not so heavy as to raise premiums unduly.

A *Business Week* report on consumerism said: "Redesigning the product—actually doing something—is the last defense of business." Industry is now wailing over the huge damage settlements juries are awarding victims of product-related accidents, and, in the absence of any federal pressures, that may be the most effective way to make manufacturers sensitive to safety problems. The shortcoming, of course, is that a husband's eye must first be lost or a child badly scalded.

A Hughes Aircraft Corp. engineer, Willie Hammer, writing in *Machine Design*, defines the problem of safe design in consumer products. "The number of accidents that occur daily indicates that designers are failing to apply and provide suitable preventive measures. A major reason for the failure is the multiplicity of requirements and considerations for performance, cost, time, size and weight. . . . Safety is often one of the requirements that suffers."

Since engineers respond to the priorities of their managers who, in turn, are guided by the market, mere exhortation about safe design will never bring it about. The question becomes, how can product safety be made a top concern? The commission answers the question by calling for a "federal presence" in the field, a product safety agency.

The fate of the recommendation is still in doubt. Congress has not yet acted on the legislation already introduced, which includes a Senate Commerce Committee bill that is a verbatim copy of what the product safety commission drew up. Meanwhile, the Administration is silent on the subject. At a press conference last summer, Elkind reflected on the inertia over product safety. Perhaps musing over the Commission on Obscenity and Pornography (with which he shared a building), he said, "Unfortunately, product safety has no sex appeal." □

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BOOKS & THE ARTS

'You Have Not Studied Them Right'

TO PURGE THIS LAND WITH BLOOD. *By Stephen B. Oates. Harper & Row. 434 pp. $10.*

TRUMAN NELSON

Mr. Nelson is the author of The Surveyor, *a study of John Brown's guerrilla warfare in Kansas, and a forthcoming book on Brown's similar action at Harper's Ferry.*

Stephen B. Oates's new biography of John Brown has met with almost complete acceptance and much praise. There was something inevitable about this, and it is also inevitable that this will be the "taught" book about John Brown for some time. The industrious author touches all the bases on the research map and shuffles and arranges his cards with all the required decorum and expertise. But the whole performance is irrelevant in terms of the old man himself, and his strikingly close relationship to the revolutionary mood prevailing today.

In substance it is an updating of the weighty and sympathetic biography assembled by Oswald Garrison Villard. But there is none of the love and awe that Villard felt for the great old revolutionary, despite his honesty in presenting all the known and unerasable demerits and ambiguities Brown collected in a passionately human lifetime. Oates serves John Brown up in Texas style, with plenty of blood and barbecue sauce. He describes him as "the violent old man," or the "violent old Calvinist," who "hated the Democrats and despised the Republicans," who "always exhibited a puritanical obsession with the wrongs of others" and "punished them with an Old Testament vengeance."

In his zeal to fit Brown into his image of a fanatical Calvinist bigot, Oates is forced to malign Brown's friends and the Abolitionists themselves. "Politically he supported John Quincy Adams, the dogmatic, overbearing Secretary of State and advocate of the neo-Federalist American system." There is no hint here that Brown might have supported John Quincy Adams because he made it known, during his terms as Senator, Secretary of State and President, that he considered slavery "a great and foul stain upon the Union" —that Adams' personality demanded that he be not only the raucous and indomitable foe of slavery in the House of Representatives, to his dying breath, but that he stand on the floor of Congress and proclaim the right of revolution as a political absolute, while predicting, with barely disguised satisfaction, a vast slave insurrection.

Abolitionist writing, bearing testimony against slavery, constantly quoted Washington, Jefferson, Patrick Henry and the Pope, and contained some of the finest prose and most subtle concepts of Thoreau, Emerson, Wendell Phillips, Lysander Spooner, Lydia Maria Child, Harriet Martineau, Frances Anne Kemble, Whittier, Longfellow, Lowell, Theodore Parker, William Jay, Theodore Weld, John Woolman, Benjamin Franklin, Samuel Sewell and scores of other luminaries in the intellectual firmament. Oates reduces it to this: "in the abolitionist publications that Brown and his friends read all planters were portrayed as beady-eyed, heaven-flouting Simon Legrees who not only beat their slaves with savage glee but raped Negro girls in a frenzy of lust." This simplistic, sophomoric kind of summarizing pervades the book. Even the anti-Calvinist Garrison is polished off as a man "who felt that God was working through him to carry out the final triumph of righteousness over sin." The author is far more God-obsessed, sin-obsessed and violence-obsessed than Brown or any of his friends.

Oates's misunderstanding or maligning of John Brown begins with his title: *To Purge This Land With Blood.* Brown's last prophetical statement, which summed up a life of ceaseless emancipatory thought, said just the opposite. "I had, as I now think *vainly*, flattered myself that without very much bloodshed, it [the abolition of slavery] might be done." Oates cites, as his authority for the judgment that Brown believed "there was no recourse but in God and a massive slave uprising in which the blood of the slaveholders would be spilled," Brown's close associate and early biographer, Franklin Sanborn. Yet in the many versions of Sanborn's recollections of what Brown's intentions were, there is never anything about a general insurrection and blood bath, but the very opposite. Sanborn claimed that Brown planned a very localized operation, wherein the freed slaves would come immediately under a constitution already accepted by black refugees in Canada, for a long holding operation in a black separatist state. Expansion would come gradually according to the forces available for governing and carrying out planned warfare.

> His plans were perfect in their most trivial detail. He knew exactly how each of his forts could be built, how many of his men could hold it, how they could retreat from that position to another. . . . He did not wish to begin with a great force, but with one that could be easily handled; he did not expect the slaves to come to him in great numbers, nor did he wish it, for he wanted no more followers than he could easily arm and discipline. . . . All this was to be governed by his constitution for the government of the territory he could wrest from slavery . . . and into the control of his own little band.

Further emphasizing his understanding that Brown did not want the bloody, random slaughter which Oates accuses him of planning, Sanborn says further: "The particular service he desired of me was to take charge of his white hostages, the slaveholders, and convince them one way or another that their best course was to free their own slaves and advise others to do the same."

Somehow the reading and citing of these quotations from Sanborn are fantasized by Oates into: "The slaveholder lived in mortal terror of the very thing John Brown planned to visit upon him— another Nat Turner insurrection . . . an insurrection in which, in the dark of some malignant night, insurgent Negroes would ax the slaveholder and his sons to death and gang rape his wife and daughters." This happens to be almost exactly the accusation of the prosecutor, Andrew Hunter, at Brown's hanging trial in Charlestown, and it is no truer now than it was then. Ironically the revulsion from slavery and racism in this country has brought many people to the point where such an insurrection against slave-holding states and the killing of those who defended them could be looked upon as justifiable homicide on the part of the victims and their friends. The most brutal interpretation of what Brown did no longer shocks and horrifies the reader. Furthermore, everything Brown did in Kansas, or at Harper's Ferry, can be now considered ethically compatible with actions and tactics familiar to revolutionary guerrilla warfare and liberating resistance movements. At this stage of history, his intensive guerrilla action in

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Kansas cannot be separated from the Free State victory there, nor can his limited partisan coup at Harper's Ferry be detached from the final victory at Appomattox.

So now John Brown, in his newest trial, has to be rehanged by his detractors on the triple cross of his "Calvinism," his "mendacity" and his "violence." Oates begins his judgment of John Brown with the flat assertion that "Theologically Brown was an orthodox nineteenth-century Calvinist who believed in fore-ordination and providential signs, in the doctrine of election, innate depravity and in man's total dependence on a sovereign and arbitrary God." Brown might have said he believed in some of these things, but in practice he was a Calvinist who did not regularly attend church for twenty years, who so disbelieved in the "innate depravity" of man that he fought to free men often chained up like ferocious animals, who put guns in their hands and depended upon them to act toward their late oppressors with justice and mercy. Here was an "orthodox Calvinist" who, for the last weeks of his life, preached in a Dunker church whose congregation believed in universal redemption and, in matters of faith and practice, resembled the Society of Friends. He refused to have ministers at his hanging; he had them ejected from his prison cell. The only clergymen he had a close relationship with were Theodore Parker and Thomas Wentworth Higginson, both Unitarian freethinkers to the point of blasphemy. None of the men with him at the Ferry could tolerate organized religion. His own sons were agnostics. It is true that he used a profoundly religious idiom in his writing and his speech, but, as Donald Freed recently pointed out, before Marx, the Bible provided radicals with an acceptable vocabulary of dissent which "allows one to take extreme positions when required and yet not cede an inch of humanism or patriotism to the status quo."

Actually all Brown took from Calvinism was its revolutionary cutting edge and its revolutionary righteousness. With it he could explain why he acted without consciousness of guilt, against the law and against the system. He used the language of "Christ, my captain of liberty" to take away the guilt from those in fear and trembling over attacking a lawful chattel slavery. When in a dialogue with those who did not need the prop of God talk, he was quite divested of the religious idiom.

In terms of his actions from principle his religious beliefs are really unimportant, but when they are put forward as the sole motivation for his revolutionary life, an enormous distortion of this life occurs. Installing the false consciousness of orthodox Calvinism in Brown diminishes him as a revolutionary. It makes his impulses spring from a narrow sense of sin rather than a great liberating, friend-to-man principle. Oates's simplistic view of Brown is: he thought slavery was a sin, he was implacably against sin, so he did implacable, bloodthirsty things to destroy it. Oates's epigraph for his study of Brown is " 'He was always an enigma'—William A. Phillips." All so-called God-directed people are enigmas because those who believe in one invariably insist that they are addressed quite privately. It does not seem to occur to Oates that there are many dazzlingly clear explanations for Brown's revolutionary acts. In his testimony before the Mason Committee investigating Harper's Ferry, a former Brown associate, Richard Realf, said:

> John Brown stated he had read all the books on insurrectionary warfare which he could lay his hands upon . . . the Roman warfare; the successful opposition of the Spanish Chieftains during the period when Spain was a Roman province; how with ten thousand men divided and subdivided into small companies, acting simultaneously, yet separately, they withstood the whole consolidated power of the Roman Empire through a number of years. In addition to this, he said he had become very familiar with the successful warfare waged by Schamyl, the Circassian chief, against the Russians; he had posted himself in relation to the wars of Toussaint L'Ouverture; he had become thoroughly acquainted with the wars in Hayti . . . etc.

It is hard to believe that this information was all conveyed to him by the voice of God, cosily in his inner ear. The William Phillips quoted as finding John Brown so very enigmatic, really found him so because of Brown's faith in the militancy of slaves and his disbelief in the "Sambo" theory. In an interview with Brown in 1858, Phillips writes how Brown went into his usual discussion of Spartacus and other slave-revolutionaries. "I reminded him," said Phillips, "that Spartacus and the Roman slaves were warlike people . . . the Negroes were a peaceful, domestic, inoffensive race. In all their suffering they seemed to be incapable of resentment or reprisal. 'You have not studied them right,' he said, 'and you have not studied them long enough. Human nature is the same everywhere.' " To Phillips, anybody so un-racist had to be an "enigma."

After this transplant of the conscience of an orthodox Calvinist into Brown, a conscience locked into stern commandments against telling lies and stealing private property, it is easy to make the old man out a mendacious hypocrite. Brown often told whopping lies and took the horses and goods of slaveholders when necessary. He lied all over New England when he raised money, guns and men to attack Virginia and arm the blacks, saying piously all the while that it was to protect the persons and property of white settlers in Kansas. He was one of the greatest con men of his day. In Cleveland, when he sold horses stolen from pro-slavery partisans, he answered some questions about their dubious titles by saying, "They were pro-slavery horses but I converted them to good abolitionist horses." He was, in the naive argot of the scholars, "mendacious" to the very end. He went to the gallows, to his God, with a lie on his lips. When he was brought around the jail to say goodby to his comrades, just before he mounted his coffin for the short ride to his hanging, he was suddenly led to confront Albert Hazlett, one of the raiders. Hazlett had not yet been

WALKING TO BETHLEHEM

Walking on down
the road. Bethlehem. (

Pa., that is.); no child
brewing, nothing

in the way of
legend. The landscape

is angular, swiftover
hills, country comfort; that

old fashion feeling fully
grown. Nothing

is about to break forth or
give out a scream. The

moment is weed, sold
earth, several trees. History

is inside the barn settling
the dust. New places. New

turnings. New days away from
dangerous new york nights, sub-

versive streets. Lying in the
grass, the sides beset by

pale orchards, no place but
here half hidden from the sky.

Walking on down to where
you can breathe; in the tender

moments away from cities; the
whole illusion looking down, not

taxing the heart, not counting
who we are.

Allen Katzman

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properly identified, and although he had been put into a cell with the black revolutionaries, Shields Green and John Copeland, they had not uttered a word which would have betrayed him as their associate. When, with malice aforethought, Brown's executioners forced this confrontation, he said, "Take me away. I do not know this man." Whenever John Brown's revolutionary morality came into conflict with his Calvinism, it was the Calvinism and the Bible and the fear of God himself that went down and the revolution that prevailed.

Oates's portrait is of a hate-filled man, and so John Brown is taught in the canon of American historiography. The violence of the oppressed driven against the wall is always interpreted as hate, while the chronic violence of the oppressor, the slave driver on the plantation or the cop in the ghetto is never characterized but taken for granted as a permissible abstraction: as law and order. If Henry Thoreau had written in a contemporary graduate thesis, instead of in his marvelous "Plea for John Brown," that "No man has appeared in America, as yet, who loved his fellow man so well and treated him so tenderly. He lived for him. He took up his life and he laid it down for him," he would have found "absurd" and "absolute rot" written on his margins. Equally unacceptable would have been Frederick Douglass' description of "the violent old Calvinist," as "an even-tempered man, neither morose, malicious nor misanthropic, but kind, amiable, courteous and gentle in his intercourse with me. . . . He loved society, he loved little children, he liked music and was fond of animals."

Many women loved Brown. Few characters in history have had such an outpouring of love offered them—particularly after having been convicted of murder and treason. George Stearns's wife, writing to Brown just after her husband had been implicated as one of Brown's backers, said: "For the *truth's* sake I can let you die; but for our affection's sake we would put our arms around you and hold you here forever." Lydia Maria Child wrote: "I reverence you for the humanity which tempered your zeal; I sympathize with you in your cruel bereavement, your suffering and your wrong. In brief, I love you and bless you."

The humanity Mrs. Child was referring to came about when Brown, seeing his son shot down while carrying a flag of truce, turned to assure his hostages that he intended no vengeance or retaliation against them. His consideration for them was so profound that one of his most devoted black comrades, Osborne Anderson, complained that this alone was responsible for the apparent failure at Harper's Ferry.

> And could our brave old Captain have steeled his heart against the entreaties of his captives, or shut up the fountains of his sympathies against their families—could he, for a moment, have forgotten them, in the selfish thought of his own friends and kindred, or, by adhering to the original plan, had left the place and thus looked forward to the prospective freedom of the slaves, hundreds ready and waiting would have been armed before twenty-four hours had elapsed.

This is why it is so infuriating to read the overall assertion that Brown was cranked up for the "random shedding of blood." Over and over again a reader sympathetic to John Brown, (and what is so wrong with that?) can find in him consummate acts of love. In Kansas, in December of 1858, Brown learned of a slave in Missouri with a wife and two children, who was about to be sold and separated permanently from his family. Brown took a few of his men, went over the border and liberated twelve slaves, along with all the property he felt they had earned with their unrequited toil. Then, in the depths of a merciless prairie winter, with slave hunters in hot pursuit, with bounties on his head, and almost single-handed, he brought the slaves all the way to freedom in Canada, without the loss of a single one. Even the gain of one, because a child was born to one of the women and named John Brown.

There were desperate encounters with posses, government troops and Northern anti-slavery people who cast him out because he had taken private property. But all through the wintry wastes, thousands of miles, Brown shepherded these men and women with the absorption and tenderness of a father. While on the way he sought out a friend, Jake Willets of Topeka. He told him he had some people with him in dire need. Willets wrote:

> They had no shoes and but little to eat. I got a number of pairs of shoes and some little money for the good cause. As we were going down to the river I noticed Brown shivering and that his legs trembled a good deal. I suspected something and I reached down and felt of his pantaloons and found they were of cotton, thin and suited to summer, not to the cold weather we had then. I asked him, "Mr. Brown, have you no drawers?"

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3.
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He said he had not. 'Well," I said, "there is no time to go to the store now but I have on a pair that were new today and if you will agree to take them, you can have them and welcome." After a few words he agreed to it.

Somehow, the old man's lack of drawers at this point tells me more about him than all the theological judgments in the Vatican. Characteristically, Oates, in his version of this affecting hegira, breaks in about halfway with a long paragraph of denigration, as recalled by the only one of Brown's men to denigrate him. Oates then balances off Brown's heroism and simple humanity with quotations to "prove" that he was "essentially vindictive in his nature, *intolerant and with an imperial egotism.*"

One of the victories of the black liberation movement has been to acquaint the whites with their crippling insensitivity to the problem of race. Some "sensitivity" training should be given to those historians who cannot recognize a great man, a great soul, a great humanitarian and abolitionist after reading every scrap of paper extant about him. Who disfigure page after page with their spurious "balancing off." Who have to write out of compartmentalized warehouses of accepted history, and run the consciousness of their students through a printed circuit of de-revolutionizing and de-principlizing interpretations. When will they understand that you can't write about revolution or revolutionaries without sensing and writing about love? That's what it's all about. Emerson knew this and said, out of the wisdom of his knowledge of John Brown, "*For the arch-abolitionist, older than* Brown, and older than the Shenandoah Mountains, is love, whose other name is Justice. . . ." □

A Poet Come in Glory

AMERICAN ELEGIES. *By Robert Hazel. A Crazy Horse Publication. North Dakota State University. (Fargo, N.D.) 44 pp. $2.*

ALLEN PLANZ

When Allen Tate ten years ago predicted that Robert Hazel, on the strength of a first book of poetry, *Poems 1951-1961* (Morehead University Press, Morehead, Ky.), would be one of the great American poets of the second half of the 20th century, he understandably was somewhat at a loss to explain why. Unlike the typical first book of poetry, without well-wrought apprenticeships and shrill derivations, *Poems* had an autonomous authority. Hazel, even then, was neither an agrarian word slinger nor, as Tate asserted, a post-surreal obscurantist but rather a man whose talent and background had delivered him to an extraordinary love of land and people, with the lifelong tragedy implicit in that love, which Tate perhaps could not accept. Tate complained of the illogical structure of the poems while granting that they, somehow, cohered, and he gracefully retreated by declaring that there was "no poet of his generation to whom more has been given."

The impact of *Poems* upon a generation educated in a repressive atmosphere, myself included, was liberating. Here was a poet come, using the American language in glory. Here was an American poet—paralleling but in no way imitating the achievement of the early Dylan Thomas—who was celebrating, in pain as in love, the richness of our landscape and experience. As Robert Bly said in a review appearing five years after the book (which went unreviewed otherwise), everywhere Hazel displays an independent mind. Each poem creates its own form, through the force of its circumstance, and nothing is excluded: love, death, Hoosier politics, American history and the ungovernable strife of living in New York. Bly was dismayed, however, by the language, whose flamboyance he took to be culpable rhetoric, and he dismissed it as mannerism.

The language of these poems is happy, sanguine and chuckleheaded, but always emotionally clear through the proliferation of images, often as disjunctive as harmonious. Self-conscious and self-indulgent only within the strictures of the occasion, Hazel's words strung the lyrical to the symphonic, modulating the tension between song and incantation, each breaking forth at times, to be later subsumed and restated. It is a language akin to the mystery of the commonplace, sensuous almost to the point of mysticism, but where, by force of evocation, mystic sensuality no longer matters, as means or end; a language of sensation, especially of touch, since often to see is to touch. There is among these poems the most accomplished elegy of these decades, "Elegy for William," in which the things of a rural world are invoked, not as mythopoeia but as they are realized in their separate yet communal mortality in the person of a man "whose love despises all things pure."

And now, ten years later, we have *American Elegies*. Ten years: ten long poems. The language is less celebrative because more freighted with the immensity of its subject and the amplitude of pain. The crises in these elegies are within ourselves, within the national psyche. The first poem in the book, entitled "NYC" (and first published in the centennial issue of *The Nation*) spells out the state of life in and of the city through an imagistic shorthand—a foreshortening, I take it, that, together with the literary allusions, electrify by understatement. Seeking a measure of chaos, the poet asks, "Lover, tell me the best hate/Murderer, tell me the best love." There is neither measure nor answer. The poem ends, with the ringing cry, "Acropolis builders, stand with me here, *see how you failed!*"

There is a terrible wrongfulness about some of these poems. Hazel has in part succumbed to the attritional demon of the age; to the genre that has come to be called confessional poetry, in which the artist, having no objective criteria, in fact no culture presupposing an audience with a unified sensibility, sets forth nakedly, so that even failure is inductively rewarding. Expense of one's own spirit is the measure, to be mongered by cultural elites; mannerism the calculus of failure, the hip journey work of making do and covering ground. But if Hazel mistakes himself, he is still drawn, in despair as he had been in grief, to that otherness which has been labeled, derisively, the American Dream.

The lone black man
in this gritty precinct
of flower children
woke me at 4:00 this morning
crying "Whore of Babylon."
Near sleep I heard something
perfect as a dream
so certain that I felt
it would survive my waking
It was only the hoarse
repetitions of a drunk man
shouting, cursing, weeping
how this nation was killing
all his innocent children
Yet strangely when he stood
pounding the garbage cans
and imploring "America"
the word sounded beautiful
as if he believed it.

These poems are elegies: poems of loss, bereavement and attempted reconciliation. "Grief is a way to turn/but who can see tears in the rain." There are poems on national figures, on the rural heartland and the majestic ruin of the metropolis. "A gone world, ours." The impulse to write of "Black by White" is spectral, nowadays. Noble but dangerous. To decry "destruction, the squander of continents, the gunning down, in Asian meadows and American cities, of brown men and women" is to

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risk confusion and fury, a cornball display of residual pieties nobody takes seriously any more. Poets braving these themes have notoriously sought to define them through a style, usually a reductive syntax, as if by achieving a measure of excellence they could assuage the ambiguity of the gesture and demonstrate at least the longing for commitment. Excellence is indeed a measure and Hazel excels in anguish, embracing rather than embarrassing the reality, however intolerable, of the occasion. Hazel is a visionary poet because he is "empty of pain, free of illusion" at his journey's end. What was dearly held and dearly lost—"How good of my father/to have killed only himself"—is still held, still clear: "I have told you our happiness/and why/Father, I am willing to die." His journey is an indivisible process of recognitions of the things of this world, in their shifting discreteness, their pained communality: of respect for discreteness, of love for communality. That is Hazel's passion. To gaze, as Camus put it, as squarely at the light as at death.

Malcolm X, Martin Luther King, John Kennedy, men so much of their time, assassinated. Indiana, Carolina, New York, in the stinking effulgence of youthful promise, dying. "The speed of dark is the same as the slow of light." Myth is no solace; flesh is not mythic; time and history deny any mythic dimension. "loss is my skill/Let every man be perfect at something." A poetry, then, commensurate with the loss—a tribal healing by song against emptiness, in the silence that has stunned everyone else into hypocrisy or vilification. So perceived, corporate history resurrects the dead in an ecstasy without transcendence, pain without sublimation, and hence death dances, undefeated, to a particular music, like snow falling on an intimate landscape.

If I sit in a deaf room with blind
walls this Sunday
awed by the slow morning radiance,
who can say no, if I say yes?

Hazel neither tries to identify the American character nor identify himself with it. He lives it, specifically that of the "white anglo-saxon protestant," with which he very properly entitled a powerful story he recently published in *The Hudson Review*. There, in fiction, he was able to disassemble that character into the polar personalities of an aggressive, impotent editor and a creative, passive writer. Their relationship deteriorates into minor apocalypse, leaving in the end the editor dead of casual street violence and the writer bereft of a wife. The racism that has come to the surface in this decade reveals, with a devastating shock, the lineaments of the white male liberal psyche. In fiction, impotence leads to fury, agape to alienation.

But few white poets have confronted this theme so honestly and relentlessly. "Blood is the crown of my race!" The love that nourishes and sustains, while not lost in what Hazel calls our "post-christian era," has a perspective hitherto masked by liberal tradition, so that Hazel implores

God, drag these loves
at the end of a leather halter
like the dead cats and dogs
I dangled as a child
at the end of a dusty rope
before they begin to stink

Just so, in his injured but still beautiful world, whose society makes both private and public love corrupt the beloved, and that proves itself false by possession. Nevertheless, still loving, still needing to love, to preserve that which delivered him magnificently to a dream of love that has no way out, he abides with a grand, stoic passion:

It is nearing dawn
This is the way I say no to God
and the way God laughs back at me
in the cold shirt of my skin □

THEATRE

HAROLD CLURMAN

Of all his "middle period" plays, Ibsen's *An Enemy of the People* (1882) is the simplest and, one might even say, the shallowest. It is nevertheless a sound, and in certain circumstances an immensely effective, play. It should be seen.

It is not constructed like most of Ibsen's mature works, which are based on the subtle exposition of past events. The ensuing action is the compact summation of what has previously been revealed. In this way both the play's argument and its characters acquire the special density particular to the great Norwegian. The narrative line of *An Enemy of the People* is traditionally straightforward; the characterizations, though brilliantly sharp, are on the whole summary. Still, plot development and character delineation give further evidence of the dramatist's master hand.

It is an indignant *comedy*. It centers on the discovery by a doctor, Thomas Stockmann, that the water in the medicinal baths of a small town is polluted—a situation that parallels certain present-day crises. The town's "establishment"

KATALLAGETE

The title of the magazine is Greek and it means **Be Reconciled,** but the contents (pure English, though often with a drawl or twang) don't often sound as if we have reached that mental state.

For a contribution of from $2 to $5 a year (measure your own ability to pay), we will start your subscription with the current issue's remarks on **Billy Graham, the Press, Racism, Annihilating the Hillbilly, Militarism, and Conspiracy** by James Branscome, Will Campbell, Anthony Dunbar, William Dow, H. O. Edwards, D. F. Fleming, J. Y. Holloway, and Robert Sherrill.

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—the Mayor who is Stockmann's brother, the liberal press and almost all the citizens—oppose the disclosure of the medical facts because the baths are the town's chief source of income. To construct means of purifying the water would take two or three years, create a business depression and, worst of all, require an increase in taxes. Stockmann insists that, whatever the damage to business, the baths are not to be used till their decontamination is effected.

Ibsen uses this material to say much more than its surface details indicate. In his hands the play becomes not only an exposure of the mechanism of capitalist society but a championing of the lone fighter, the revolutionary in opposition to the "compact majority." Such truly independent individuals, Ibsen vehemently declares, stand at the outposts of civilization. Because the news they bring is very often inimical to custom and immediate self-interest, they are almost always branded as the people's enemies. "You are fighting for the truth," Stockmann tells his family, "and that makes you strong . . . and the strong must learn to be lonely." Ibsen's personal experience galvanizes the play: he felt himself to be such a man.

In our own present social situation, the types depicted in the play, as well as particular lines and speeches, strike home. Young people in the audience recognize the aptness of Ibsen's meaning and are stirred to applause. The play is "propaganda," but it retains its vitality because it is rooted in the perception of something more than a timely argument. It dramatizes a permanent dilemma, and that brings it close to the eminence of tragedy.

But it nevertheless is a comedy. One recognizes it as such, not only by the humor and wit that pepper almost every scene but also by the character portrayal, especially that of Stockmann himself. He is an innocent and something of a fool. What does he know of economics, of politics, of domestic husbandry? His very ineptitude and ignorance in these matters thrust him toward heroism! His fanaticism is forced upon him. At first he is credulous, happily blustering, childishly extravagant; he is the "absent-minded professor" who sees no further than the pleasure he takes in the small world of creature comforts, family devotion, pride in the service he performs as a physician. The play dramatizes the education of this bumbler. The fortitude that seizes him comes from the kind of shock which sometimes integrates a man's spirit.

The production at the Repertory Theatre at Lincoln Center, under Jules Irving's direction, has its assets—apart from the initial one, which is the choice of the play. Several of the actors give their most convincing performances: Sidney Walker as Stockmann's clownish rascal of a father-in-law has never been so good; David Birney as Hovstad, the devious pseudo-radical newspaper editor, reveals an unexpected capacity for characterization; Conrad Bain is properly funny as Aslaksen, the newspaper publisher, and Philip Bosco provides a solidly grounded impression as Peter Stockmann, the protagonist's brother.

Then there is Stephen Elliott as Dr. Stockmann. Here, as in other of his appearances, Elliott is a good actor. But the part's comedic aspect—that is, the man's development from the simple-minded bourgeois citizen, idealistic with a sympathetically laughable candor, to the exasperated and staunch combatant of the play's climax—is missing. From the outset this Stockmann is too conscious, too capable, too strong. This need not have been so, because Elliott, though massive in person, is a sufficiently practiced character actor to have fulfilled what I have suggested is Ibsen's design. But the director, intent on the play's message, its hortatory and politically inflammatory values, has stressed them disproportionately.

Further evidence of this is visible in the abstract settings, which are more like arenas than inhabited places. These vast spaces surrounding the small groups of actors (except in one scene) demand broad effects and diffuse the play's impact. Making an "epic" of *An Enemy of the People* does not enhance but rather diminishes Ibsen's originality and power. On this account the production almost misfires.

A word about Arthur Miller's adaptation: it is an affront to both Ibsen and Miller to think of this *Enemy of the People* as anything but Ibsen's play. Miller has cut it, given it a more vernacular American sound than is usual, and sharpened a few speeches for greater contemporary persuasiveness. The adaptation is an excellent piece of work.

POEM

I have keys on my ring
I have forgotten what they mean
I have a child in my house
I don't know if she's mine
What is the color of the daisy's eye
in my lost country?

A city square in slush somewhere near Boston?
Footprints there are slowly melting
slowly melting footprints
in the slush snow melting
into the diagonal

between 8 black trees

Robert Nichols

In fiction and drama Peter Abélard is rarely the giant intellect of medieval theology who argued the role of reason as a support of faith; more typically he is the unhappy hero of a love affair with his brilliant student Héloïse, and the victim of bigotry coupled with morbidly punitive morality in regard to sex. Héloïse's family chastened him, in Abélard's words, by "cutting off those parts of my body with which I had done that which was the cause of their sorrow."

Ronald Millar's *Abélard and Héloïse*, a successful English play and production, is now at the Brooks Atkinson Theatre. It is not a good play but it would be less than fair to leave the statement so bare. Mr. Millar is no cheap-jack; he meant to say something with his *Abélard and Héloïse*.

Discreetly and obliquely the play proclaims the superior force of sacred over profane love. Abélard loves Héloïse passionately as she forever loves him, but after he has lost the capacity to make love he achieves the highest love, a total acceptance of God's will. Héloïse never rises to this exalted state, but through her dedication to Abélard she pretends to share in his faith and say yea to his transcendence of the flesh.

Whatever one may think of the psychological implication of this conclusion, it is surely one that might well lend itself to touching dramatic utterance. But Millar's play leaves one cold; worse still, its motivation remains unclear. Millar writes smoothly, but his language lacks sinew and personality. One does not believe in Abélard's intellect (it is indicated only by scholarly quips)

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or in his passion—or, for that matter, in Héloïse's. They orate. When they are disclosed in a nude embrace, the scene is unfortunately devoid of the least quiver of eroticism. Millar does not present living creatures, but mouthpieces.

The playing of the two central roles hardly helps to overcome this impression. One may allow that Diana Rigg and Keith Michell speak well (though it is a prejudice among Americans to equate English accents with fine speech), but their acting is mainly elocution. This, however, is not entirely the fault of the actors or even of the director: the play lacks inner emotional dynamics. Only a staid and convention-bound audience could today find anything fresh in such a production. It is not at all representative of the best in the contemporary English theatre. □

ART

LAWRENCE ALLOWAY

There is evident at present an intensification of artists' use of new media. In recent exhibitions and performances these have included grass, pencil marks on the wall, live eels and the human body. A few examples like that make it clear that artists are stepping outside the technology of painting and sculpture. To some this extension is a way of moving into the gadget-filled world that technology provides; to others it is an analogue of survival techniques, on the model of equipment in the Whole Earth Catalogue. In either case, an aesthetic of personal control is retained, though control may be of a variable system rather than of a set form. A system that includes anticipated options for spectators can be as autographic as a drawing; an artist's executive decisions are no less personal than his touch.

The problem of artistic control and of the status of art that incorporates new stuff has been raised frequently this season. For example, the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston, has reached its hundredth anniversary and, unexpectedly, the celebrations include an art and technology show called "Earth Air Fire Water: the Elements" (until April 4). For once the mechanized exhibits worked well—aside from the irregular attendance of representatives from the Boston Fire Department without whose presence some of the fire pieces could not be worked at all. Virginia Gunter not only arranged the show and assembled it but kept it running, which is more than can be said for "Some More Beginnings," the Experiments in Art and Technology show of 1968, or last year's "Software" show at the Jewish Museum.

Such exhibitions rely heavily on the willingness of artists to work on the site, a remarkable example of which at Boston was the installation of Newton Harrison's "Air, Earth, Water Interface," an 8-by-16-foot pasture, growing under a roof of lights the height of a table. It is a garden blazing away indoors, like a hydroponic oasis. Air: Otto Piene's "Red Rapid Growth" is an expansion of his earlier "Fleurs du Mal," with four inflatable forms rising 35 feet from the marble floor. Fire: Charles Ross has planned a group of lenses to sear blocks of wood with burns of a day's, a week's, a month's duration. Water: Hans Haacke's "Circulation," a branching pattern of narrow tubes, bright with bubbles, underfoot; and Richard Budelis' "Eel Track" with live eels coursing through vinyl tunnels. (The eel/tunnel system worked better than the gerbil/computer standoff at the Jewish Museum.)

As examples of architecture there are, I take it, two modern museums of consequence: Henry Van Velde's Kroller-Muller Museum in Holland and Frank Lloyd Wright's Guggenheim Museum in New York. (The other places, put up by Mies van der Rohe, Marcel Breuer, Louis Kahn and the rest, are more or less casual extensions of types of space originated for other functions.)

Hence the interest of the sixth Guggenheim International Exhibition (running until April 11), in which the best works seem to be those prepared for, or adapted to, the building. They function as emphases on the given structure, accents on one or another aspect of Wright's building. Richard Long has painted a trail on the floor of an upper ramp deriving from Wright's spiral; Mario Merz has distributed a sequence of neon figures along the inner curve of the spiral, stating its measurements. Other artists have accepted as modules the bays into which the ramps are divided. Sol Lewitt's systematic graffiti stay within the bays and so does Dan Flavin's suite of colored lights (a kind of Castro Convertible showroom romanticism of the kind that once was Donald Judd's alone). Judd himself uses the difference between the angle of the ramp and the true horizon in a two-ring sculpture. Daniel Buren would have hung banners from dome to ground level, except for Flavin's objection that it spoiled the long view of his work. (Reportedly, the banners looked very well in a dry run.) The exhibition is a collection of the best low-energy art in town: that is to say, the works are neither compact nor evocative but expand on the architectural frame with sophisticated modesty.

The present Guggenheim International Exhibition is a new version of what used to be called the Guggenheim International Award (the awards were given by jury but disaffected artists put an end to that). The museum has tried several formats to keep this recurrent event going, but the fact is that global shows are obsolete. The information that they contain is distributed more quickly and fully by printed media. The director claims that these Internationals "provide opportunities and impose obligations upon the Museum's staff to keep in touch with the creative art scene throughout the world," but that is not the case here. To quote Rubens Gerchman, a Brazilian conceptual artist (Jack Misrachi Gallery): "International Art is not International Art but Cultural Imperialism." In the Guggenheim exhibition, certainly, internationalism is identified precisely with one section of the market. Of the twenty-one artists shown, eight are represented in New York by the Dwan Gallery and five by Leo Castelli; from Europe, nine are with Konrad Fischer in Düsseldorf, five with Heiner Friedrich in Munich (and eight of the artists show at pairs of the European and American galleries). Given Diane Waldman's decision to concentrate on post-object artists, those are four of the galleries on which she would naturally lean. Most of the foreign artists in the show are closely identified with

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PERSONALS

HEAVEN

"A rich man has as much chance to get to heaven as a camel to go through the eye of a needle."

The traditional view is that the good guys are on the side of Light, or enlightenment, and the devils are on the side of Darkness (fostered ignorance, misinformation, lying, cheating, fraud, black deceit, diabolical tricks, etc.).

Where are you in this struggle?

From a short term point of view the latter side seems more pragmatic. There are bribes, boondoggle plums, etc. for being servile collaborators and lackeys. And dedicated enlightenment seems like, oh, such thankless work.

Is heaven a place in the sky, or a state of personal satisfaction achieved by living "right"?

Which gives greater long term satisfaction, immediate material acquisition, or long term investment in enlightenment, charity, peace, beauty?

You're too young to know. Why don't you consult someone older than you?

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this New York-German axis. Perhaps it is time to drop the "international" in the exhibition's title.

Gestures, ideas and records are proliferating under the aegis of visual art, rather as poetry was an umbrella term in France in the 1920s and 1930s. This is partly because several permissive definitions of art are now securely founded. Just as happenings were not invented by theatre people but could have arisen only in the visual arts, so artists are once again experimenting. At the Loeb Student Center early in the year were two programs by six artists called "Body." One of them, Vito Acconci, describes a body work called "Trademarks" as follows: "Biting myself (biting as much of my body as I can reach). Applying printer's ink to the bites; stamping bite prints on various surfaces" (using his body as the stamp). At the De Sausset Museum, University of Santa Clara in February, Paul Kos performed a piece called "rEvolution," subtitled "90 minutes invisible weight exchange from artist to target—40 pounds small arms ammunition." The documentation includes photos of the blasted target and before-and-after pictures of the artist's shoulder, showing the bruise of the rifle's recoil. Both Acconci and Kos are isolating for aesthetic classification the body's role in a process —self-inflicted wounds transferred by body pressure in Acconci's case, and Kos defining his body as one end of the trajectory.

Douglas Huebler scheduled himself to hitchhike between Düsseldorf and Turin for a week last year, starting from a mid-point on Christmas Day. He headed north or south, toward Germany or Italy, according to the flip of a coin. A little later, he showed in galleries in the target cities documents of the trip—maps, Polaroid photographs, time charts and coordinates. Robert Watts is exhibiting a group of documents entitled "Addendum to Pop Art" at the studio of Billy Apple (161 West 23 Street, second floor, until April 10). At the height of the popularity of Pop art, Watts tried to copyright the words: this did not work (it was judged a generic term), but his research remains. He is now showing photocopies of the patents on all kinds of products with names related to Pop art such as "Pop!," "Pop's," "Pop-ettes," "Pop-Pops," "Q-Pops," "Pop Dogs," and "Poppy Toaster." The art movement thus takes its place in a verbal play of low comedy. Preceding Watts's ironies at the same gallery, was a "Matter Transformation," a continuous project through much of March, in which three artists collected and pulverized various materials. Billy Apple (a former light artist) broke glass tubing (wiping out his past?), Geoff Hendricks brought earth from the country and scattered it (anti-urban?), and Jerry Vis pounded sandstones into sand. The studio looked like the simulated model of a waste lot. The documents of Huebler and Watts are certainly objects and the process of "Matter Transformation" demonstrated the change, not the destruction, of specific materials. If an object is a "thing thrown before [the mind]," to quote the OED, these are objects.

The going explanation for all this activity, however, is that it is post-object art. Supposedly, the aesthetic of art as an object is obsolete, but the more often this is repeated the less convincing it sounds. Barbara Rose and Thomas Messer both advocate the perishing object theory, he in the catalogue of the Guggenheim show, she in *Vogue*. But the kind of object that art is forces us to consider it as an object of significant power and, to the extent to which it functions as a sign, its dumb object status is redeemed. An object, as something that one knows or thinks of, is any legible configuration; in this sense, so-called non-object art is an object, too. Conceptual and environmental works, to the extent that they deny the time-binding and semantic functions of art, are insistently objects, not ideas or systems.

An object can be isolated from other connections (as formal criticism claims autonomy for art, for instance) or it can be seen in context, as the component of a system. Recent writers on conceptual and environmental art have neglected this fact. They have tried to make the limitation of formalist criticism into the condition of all prior forms of art and to represent systems theory as the distinctive form of a new art. Objects and systems are thus being used as a way to avoid the banality of saying modern and traditional, us and them. Renaissance art could be subjected to a systems approach and conceptual art's proposals and records have an irreducible physical form as objects. What has happened is that variant objects have appeared, not that artists have moved into an ideal realm of thought. □

THINKING OF ANAIS NIN

I dream of wayward gulls
and all landless lovers
rare moments of winter sun
peace, privacy, for everyone.

William F. Claire

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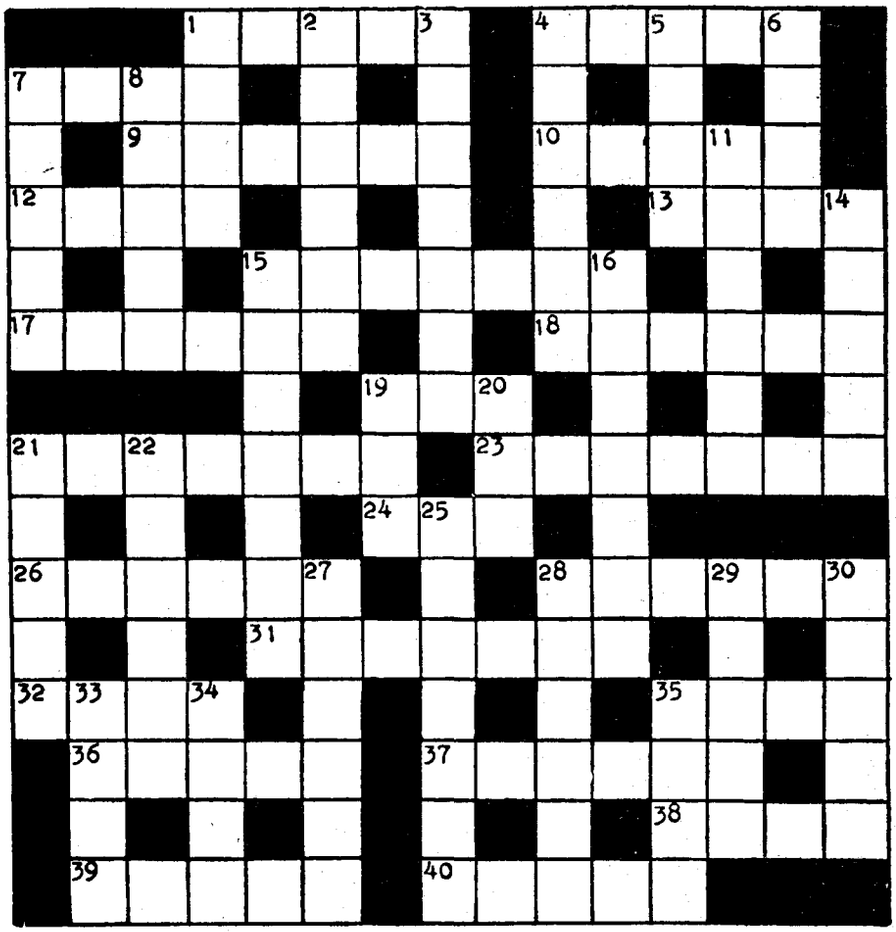
Crossword Puzzle No. 1387

FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS

1, 20, 22 and 38 Evidently this sherif was a nightingale, at least in song. (5,3,6,4)
9 Acts snaky, possibly. (6)
10 It might be material, if one gets in further. (5)
12 Inlets for the air's conditioning. (4)
17 He brought out *The Three-Penny Opera.* (4)
18 More light! (6)
19 Controversial container. (3)
21 The lowest part of the column—as the navy might have in one place or another.
23 Few reach the heights he did. (7)
24 It might not be fair to say he almost (but not quite) became a versifier. (3)
26 Tell how to be sympathetic? (6)
28 The rest concerns what one might strike.
32 One might sit on it, but not if overhead. (4)
35, 7 across, 15 across, 4 across, 31, 34, 13 and 40 Evidently one of our jurists was concerned with the price of rope. (4,4, 7,5,2,1,4,4-4,5)
36 Fair Lady? (5)
39 Perhaps too corpulent to be seen therein?

DOWN

1 A brother's sibling might be taken without any improvement. (2,2)
2 They say one can't the leopard—or any tyrant. (6)
3 He insisted acquired characteristics are passed on. (7)
4 This diplomat always has a drink on rising. (6)
5 The big picture, or only part of the picture? (4)
6 Catches up with gun? (4)
7 Beat consistently. (5)
8 and 37 An unthinking response to a request for info. (1,4,2,4)
11 Improperly retain the image on it? (6)
14 Wait with the pitch? (5)
15 I can hit this on the table, if properly set. (7)
16 Give up the past form. (7)
19 Go for half the season—it's short for the whole thing. (3)
21 Possibly the punishment of climbing roles. (5)
25 How to put the cargo in so that it is the type of food some prefer. (7)
27 One might leave it with a will! (6)
28 Pulling back on the paddle or up on the side. (6)
29 Go up to one who acts badly in getting the old writing. (5)
30 Record. (5)
33 She could change anything to wine, at least a sort of one, with nothing else.
35 Possibly take on a habit of gradual impairment. (4)

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 1386

ACROSS: 1 Essay; 4 Closet; 11 Plumage; 12 Lactose; 13 and 14 Left in the lurch; 15 Perturbations; 17 Black and white; 22 Lambs; 24 Rollbacks; 25 Prelate; 26 Fitting; 27 Desire; 28 Adage. DOWN: 2 Souffle; 3 Atavistic; 5 Local; 6 Sporran; 7 Teethe; 8 Spell; 9 Letter carrier; 10 Allemande left; 16 Inhabited; 18 Limpets; 19 Ticking; 20 Sloped; 21 Usage; 23 Stair.

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